

The Gramophone

Edited by COMPTON MACKENZIE

Contents

The Gramophone and the Singer (contd.)	HERMAN KLEIN
A Gramophonist's Guide (contd.)	PERCY A. SCHOLES
The Musical Box	LOIS GRAHAM
Tests of Pianoforte Records	ERIC SIMONS
On Making a Record	THE EDITOR
Some Funny Records	H. T. BARNETT
Surface Vibration	" INDICATOR "
Some Humours of our Hobby	DR. F. H. MEAD
On Programmes	
N.G.S. Notes, Correspondence, Analytical Notes and Reviews, Notes and Queries, Gramophone Societies' Reports.	

PLAYER-PIANO SUPPLEMENT

The Player-Piano—III. The Future	HARRY ELLINGHAM
The Evolution of the British Pianoforte	
The Ampico	
Lessons in Albeniz and Spanish Music (contd.)	SYDNEY GREW
Music Rolls for a Children's Christmas Party	" SCOPE "
Selected Lists, Notes on New Rolls, etc.	

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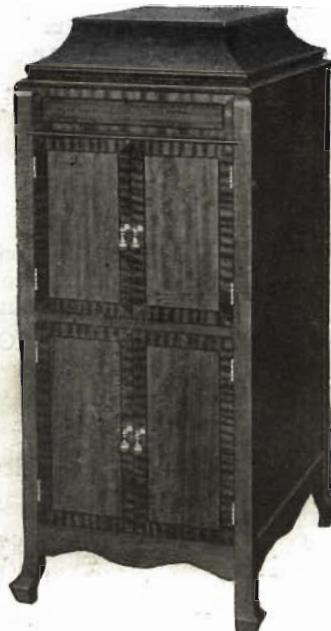
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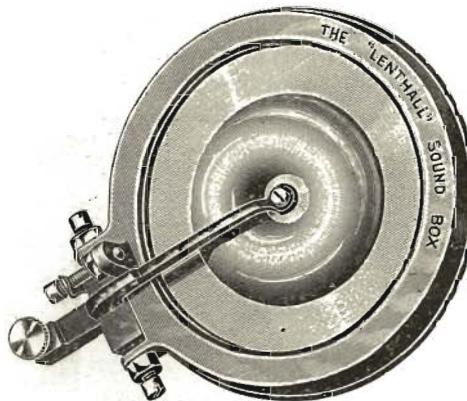
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(Vide p. 70. Vol. I. No. 4.)

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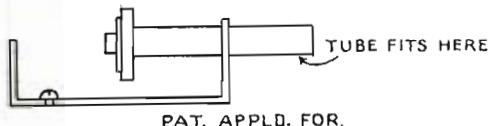
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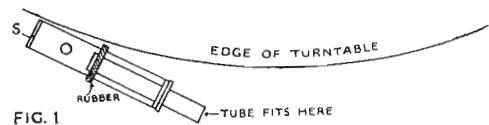
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E 5268	ADORING YOU, Fox-Trot	Parlophone Syncopaters
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E 5270	PLEASE, Fox-Trot	With Xylophone Solo
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E 5273	ONLY YOU, Fox-Trot	The Lanin Orchestra
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E 5276	BAGDAD, Fox-Trot	The Parlophone Dance Orchestra
E 5277	YOU'RE IN KENTUCKY (Sure as you're born), Fox-Trot	The Parlophone Dance Orchestra
E 5278	THE HANDY MAN, Naval Fox-Trot	The Parlophone Dance Orchestra
E 5279	OH EVA! (Ain't you coming out to-night?), Fox-Trot	Edith Lorand Orchestra
E 5280	ALIBI BABY, Fox-Trot, from "Poppy"	Edith Lorand Orchestra
E 5281	WHEN LIGHTS ARE LOW, Waltz	Billy Whitlock, with Orchestral Accompaniment
E 5282	CHILI BOM BOM, Fox-Trot	Bruce Wallace, Tenor, with Orchestral Accompaniment
E 5283	O KATHARINA, Fox-Trot	Vernon Dalhart, Tenor, with Orchestral Accompaniment
E 5284	SERENADE "FRASQUITA"	Ernest Hare, Baritone, with orch. accomp
E 5285	YOU CAN TAKE ME AWAY FROM DIXIE	Bruce Wallace, Tenor, Helen Clark, Contralto, with Orchestral Accompaniment
E 5286	IF I STAY AWAY TOO LONG FROM CAROLINA	Duet: Bruce Wallace, Tenor, Elliott Shaw, Baritone, with Orchestral Accompaniment
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Edited by

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LONDON OFFICE NOTES

The Editor.

IT is a matter of common knowledge that a photograph of the Editor appeared in the February number which represented him as a young clean-shaven man nursing a pipe, and that when next he reappeared from the Channel Islands to superintend the Steinway Hall tests in June he had a beard like Captain Kettle's. This was sufficiently disconcerting for those of his friends who wished to know him better. They found that they didn't even recognise him. But now it appears that a *Daily Mirror* camera man has found him without a beard but with a moustache at Jethou; and in this number we have the pleasure of including one out of the many excellent photographs that were taken of him the other day in his island—playing his Orchorsol, or preparing to play it—but without in any way guaranteeing that it will represent Mr. Mackenzie's facial appearance by the time that our readers get this number. Perhaps he will return from Ireland with a Dick Deadeye beard under his chin.

He is in Ireland at present, having a short rest from his almost uncanny activities; and it is hardly necessary to point out to our readers that since the publication of "The Heavenly Ladder" in July three other books of his have appeared almost simultaneously—"Santa Claus in Summer," "The

Old Men of the Sea," and now "Coral," the sequel to "Carnival," which was started as a serial in the *Daily Mirror* on the twenty-first birthday of that paper. When to this achievement the miscellaneous contributions to magazines and newspapers are added, it will be easily seen how difficult it must be for the Editor to contribute all that he would like to write on gramophone matters in these pages, or indeed even to answer a tenth of the correspondence which comes in from all corners of the globe in connection with THE GRAMOPHONE. A large proportion of the important questions with which he would prefer to deal have to be left to the indiscretion of others; and it is more perhaps on their behalf than in defence of the Editor himself that this note has been written!

* * *

Christmas.

The shops are full, and so is this number of THE GRAMOPHONE. Christmas is near at hand, and in wishing all our readers the happiest of holidays at this time we wish to add that since printers as well as editorial staffs also hope to enjoy a Christmas holiday, the January number will perhaps, like the shops, show a tendency to deflation. But we shall do our best and try to make it look as if we had never lifted our noses from the grindstone for an instant to sniff the Christmas cheer.

Gramophone Tips, 1925.

Captain Barnett's "Gramophone Tips" has become almost an annual institution, because some handy, cheap, comprehensive book on gramophone matters is very badly needed. An ambitious "Book of the Gramophone" might easily be compiled, but it would soon be out of date, and in our opinion an annual revision of a small, unpretentious survey of gramophone matters is the best solution of the problem at present. In undertaking to publish "Gramophone Tips, 1925" for Captain Barnett, we are not necessarily endorsing every view which the author takes; and indeed, he would be the first to repudiate any idea that he expressed anything but his own personal opinions. But we shall be surprised if the book does not prove as valuable to our readers in the future as in the past. It is a pleasant acknowledgment of the great help that Captain Barnett has given us from the very beginning—to be able to add his Tips to the queue of our activities.

As we have ventured to write in a personal vein about the Editor, may we be permitted to add an equally personal note about Captain Barnett? One of our readers has thought fit to suggest that Captain Barnett has an axe to grind, and that the sound of it is occasionally heard in THE GRAMOPHONE. Other readers have hinted that they do not agree with his musical taste. With regard to the first point there has never been any secret that Captain Barnett designed the Peridulce gramophone and the Euphonic needle and grip, which were put on the market by the Murdoch Trading Co.; and not unnaturally he thinks that he is justified in mentioning them occasionally in his writings without disfavour. With regard to his taste in records, he would frankly acknowledge that his chief interest in them is from an engineering point of view, and that if a banjo solo is exceptionally well recorded the fact should be mentioned with praise in the New Poor Page, even though the record might drive the rest of the reviewing staff into a frenzy.

Matters of this sort may safely be left to the good sense of our readers, who have always rightly trusted us to allow all sides a hearing and yet to guard against dishonest praise. THE GRAMOPHONE was started primarily for the interchange of views among gramophone lovers rather than for the pontifical utterances of critics—even of the Editor himself.

* * *

Poster Competition.

A surprising number of readers sent in ideas or designs for a poster for THE GRAMOPHONE, which formed the subject of the October competition, and some of the designs displayed a great deal of care

as well as ingenuity. But the subject was evidently difficult, and on the whole the results were disappointing. The prize of Two Pounds' Worth of Records goes to *Mr. R. H. Sloane*, of 29, Queen Street, Edinburgh, for a design which is based on the outline of the present cover but emphasises the idea of THE GRAMOPHONE as a guide to choice of records. Another very fine design was sent in by Mr. C. V. Parker, of 31, Walsingham Road, Enfield; and a special word of acknowledgment is due to the efforts of the following: A. W. Rossiter, Albert White, Geo. Ross, J. Le Grice Lacy, Roger Webb, junior, and Leo W. Judd.

* * *

Miniature Scores.

A reference in the September number to the importance of the possession of miniature scores for the full enjoyment of classical music has led some of our correspondents to ask for the advice which Sir Henry Wood gave at the Convention last summer; and by the courtesy of the Editor of the *Music Trades Review* we here reprint the report of Sir Henry's hints on this subject:

"Here I may be permitted to draw attention to the only way in which I have found steady advance for the amateur and the young music student in learning to follow a chamber string quartet.

"Take a first movement, open your miniature score and follow the first and second violins with concentrated attention, then close your miniature score and hear these two parts only. Then repeat the record and follow from miniature score the second violin part and the viola; close the score and listen, fixing attention upon these two parts only. Repeat the record, open miniature score again, and follow with great attention the viola and 'cello parts only; close the score and concentrate upon hearing these two parts by ear alone. Repeat the record; now following three parts in your score: Second violin, viola and 'cello, covering perhaps the first violin line over with a slip of paper. Then close the score and repeat the record again, listening to the second violin, viola and 'cello parts, training your ear to blot out the first violin part.

"Finally, take your score again, and repeat the whole record, now following the four parts. Then listen to the record again, and you will find your ear has probably become alert enough to hear the *real four parts*, no matter what melodic or contrapuntal line they may take. If you are able to do this daily for a few months you will be quite surprised at the result. I specially recommend this practice to all vocalists whose ears and hearing are, alas, as we vocal teachers and conductors know to our sorrow, too often in such a comatose condition. This will also be a splendid preparation for hearing and enjoying orchestral records. Adopt the same methods, concentrating upon the five string parts, then upon the wood-wind parts (taking first the classical works which employ 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, and 2 bassoons first), then the brass group, 2 horns, 2 trumpets and timpani. This will pave the way for larger scores with 12 wood-wind parts, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones and tuba, harp, timpani, percussion, etc.; but it is very important to realise that only by dividing up the orchestral groups into small sections can real ear training be advanced, except, of course, by specially gifted individuals."



Photograph reproduced by the

[courtesy of the Daily Mirror.]

The Editor at Jethou with the Gramophone which won the gold medal
in the Steinway Hall Tests in June.

THE GRAMOPHONE AND THE SINGER

(Continued)

By HERMAN KLEIN

Maria Jeritza—and Others.

THE two operatic sopranos who have won most popularity in America during the past few seasons are Amelita Galli-Curci and Maria Jeritza. Neither has yet been heard on the stage in this country, and goodness only knows how long it will be ere Covent Garden boasts sufficient affluence to afford us that privilege. Nowadays, however, the gramophone brings us voices long before we behold their owners; and, if we enjoy listening, we find an additional interest in endeavouring, with the aid of possibly flattering photographs, to form an idea of what the original is like. Still, even then it is only half the story. I understand from those who should know, that the Galli-Curci of the stage comes much nearer to the Galli-Curci of the amazing records than the Galli-Curci of the concert-room. That is quite comprehensible; and by a similar deduction I should form the opinion that the Jeritza of the stage approaches much more nearly to the level of her press notices than the Jeritza of the gramophone. The chief justification for this parallel reasoning lies in the fact that Galli-Curci makes perfect records and Jeritza does not. But the two *prima donnas* need not on that account come to fisticuffs. Their particular geniuses are wide as the poles asunder, and they do not cross each other's paths at any point unless when cashing huge cheques at the bank—a most unlikely *contretemps*.

Nevertheless, in spite of this phonographic disparity, there is something about the Jeritza records, some quality of atmosphere or personal magnetism, that makes them interesting. It also enables me to gather from their message the nature of the peculiar gifts that have permitted this artist to conquer in her own particular line the fastidious public of the United States, as well as that of Austria and Germany. Readers of these pages will remember my saying, not long ago, that I had never heard any of Mme. Jeritza's records; indeed, I could not state with certainty whether she had ever essayed the art of record-making. I even hazarded a guess that she had done so and failed to satisfy; but in that I was wrong. Since then I have not only listened to her records, but read her book "*Sunlight and Song*," a bright autobiography (translated by Frederic H. Martens and published by D. Appleton and Co.,

New York and London), which contains many charming portraits of the singer and an amusing chapter on "Singing for the Phonograph." Therein she admits at once that she would "rather sing through two rehearsals than make one record, at any time." Every artist would probably say the same thing; only some find it easier and less enervating than others. The point is, as Mme. Jeritza says, that the record "cannot (*i.e.*, must not) represent the artist at anything but her best," and she found it hard to do that at first, especially under American conditions, which were new to her and "very distracting." "With the orchestra so close to the singer the sound of the instruments is so overpowering that it drowns the voice and I could not hear myself sing. It is the hardest kind of hard work, and very exacting. Yet it is something that can be done if intelligence and concentration are brought to bear on the task." Besides, "the phonograph, just like the camera, must be humoured; only if you adapt yourself to the machine and find the absolutely right conditions for allowing it to reproduce your voice to the best advantage, will it do so." The number of trials, the amount of patience that singers and operators have to go through in the attainment of the model record is fabulous, incalculable. I think Mme. Galli-Curci and Enrico Caruso must have been very patient and persevering at this business.

Maria Jeritza is a native of Brünn, an old town which she says an English friend of hers once described as the "Austrian Manchester." Her first operatic parts were Elsa and Marguerite; and she must have been remarkably gifted, for she had only sung these rôles and Violetta five months in Olmütz when she became straightway engaged for the Volksoper at Vienna, where she made her débüt in 1910 as Elisabeth in *Tannhäuser*. Her success seems to have been altogether exceptional, thanks to great personal beauty and intelligence, allied with rare vocal and histrionic talent, a glorious voice, and a degree of versatility that enabled her to shine to equal advantage in the most contrasted parts. She became an immense favourite with the Viennese, from the Emperor Francis Joseph downwards, and sang in a long string of operas besides creating several new characters. Among the latter was Marietta, the

heroine of Korngold's *The Dead City*, wherein she made her first appearance at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York, on November 17th, 1921; and apparently it ranks among her finest impersonations. (An air from *The Dead City* is among the records I shall notice later on.) Mme. Jeritza's American débüt did not come, however, until after she had won a tremendous reputation, both before and during the War, in all the principal cities of Austria and Germany; but, for the story of these tours I must refer my readers to her book. I would only point out, as I did in a letter to *The Times* exactly three years ago, that, owing to there being no "international" grand opera at Covent Garden during such a long period, an event almost without precedent had occurred, namely, that a European operatic celebrity of the standing of Maria Jeritza had "skipped London" on her way to the United States without so much as opening her mouth in this country. It might be argued that Tetrazzini and Galli-Curci had done the same thing. But their cases were different, because neither had made a name for herself *before* crossing the Atlantic—Tetrazzini to make hers in Buenos Ayres, Galli-Curci hers in Chicago. How it happened that such a singer of the Strauss and Puccini operas as Jeritza was overlooked by our Grand Opera Syndicate both before and after the War is a circumstance that I do not pretend to explain. There is now no telling how long we may have to wait before hearing this greatly-lauded artist in person.

Meanwhile, what of her records? Well, as I have previously remarked, I doubt whether they actually do her justice; and yet they are well worth hearing; at least the later ones are, for I surmise that the *Elisabeth's Prayer* and *Elsa's Dream* were made when Mme. Jeritza first went to New York, and they are distinctly not so good as those which followed. She tells us herself in her book: "The process of making vocal records here in the United States, though not new to me, was novel. In Austria the phonograph is not as widely and generally distributed as here, and cannot be said to enjoy the same popularity." She was probably nervous and prone to "force" her voice by super-abundant breath-pressure; anyhow she succeeded in making the tone so unsteady that the listener who had not heard the subsequent records might well be pardoned for accusing her of a tremolo. The timbre was also too dark and heavy for a perfect rendering of Elisabeth's *Allmächt'ge Jungfrau* (H.M.V., D.B. 306), or of Elsa's *Einsam in trüben Tagen*, which is on the reverse side of the same disc. Yet the sympathetic quality of the medium voice comes out agreeably, and one perceives in both efforts the fine resonant tone of the head notes. This I noted particularly when, after an unsatisfactory essay on the Sonora Model, I

tried them again on my Columbia Grafonola, which imparted a splendid ring to the voice and far greater clearness and prominence to the orchestral accompaniment. The colouring was still too sombre, however, the text insufficiently enunciated, the vocal attack, if fairly clean, marred by a tendency to swell every accentuated note at the beginning. These faults of technique, curiously enough, are less conspicuous as the singer becomes more accustomed to her work and more at her ease in the act of recording. The rhythm and phrasing also tend to improve. But on the whole I observe that it is not given to the best of Wagnerian singers to imbue the master with exactly the same spirit (*Geist* is the word rather than *Stimmung*) on the gramophone that they do on the stage.

The Jeritza voice is a pure soprano of lyric rather than dramatic calibre, warm and musical in the medium, clear and ringing in the head tones; and she is never so much as a shade of a vibration off the true pitch. It is a pity, though, that she has not a better accent alike in French and Italian—the vowel sounds are faulty in both languages, possibly because she has never lived among people who speak either. The "a" and "o" are entirely wrong, for lack of proper teaching or correction. In *Divinités du Styx* (H.M.V., D.B.355) there are several bad mistakes of pronunciation: "transport" in French is not pronounced "trainsport," nor is "point" sung as if written "pouaint." On the other hand, the singer gets a far finer tone in this record, and also in the *Suicidio* from Ponchielli's *La Gioconda* which is on the reverse side, than she does in her German pieces—a curious but unquestionable fact. The quality in the Gluck air is distinctly superior, apart from the greater animation and rhythmical "go" which explain all the triumphs that Jeritza has won in the popular Austrian light operas. The fine *Suicidio*, however, sounded rather strident with a loud needle, and I preferred it with a "half-tone." What seemed chiefly lacking then was the sense of tragedy in the voice; beauty of tone certainly, but no great depth of expression, notably in the wonderful phrase, "Domando al cielo di dormir queta," one of the loveliest in this shamefully neglected opera. Here, again, I imagine the singer fulfils the dramatic idea in contrasts of vocal tone and colouring much more vivid in the theatre than those she gives in her record. Her American critics, at any rate, allow her credit for possessing this faculty.

On a third disc (H.M.V., D.A.524) are two more German items, namely, *Dich, theure Halle*, from *Tannhäuser*, and a harmless little air from Korngold's *Die tote Stadt*, entitled *Glück, das mir verlieb*. The former (too heavy with a loud needle) is on the whole somewhat wistful and sad for what should be a joyous greeting to the Hall of Song.

The line of melody is steadily sustained, and I like the magnificent ringing B even better than the oft-recurring G. The words, however, are not so good as one could wish. The Korngold song is graceful, if a trifle monotonous. It opens with a pretty orchestral introduction, which is capitally reproduced. The kind of folk-tune sung by Marietta should be very effective in the opera, for the semi-religious pattern of some of the phrases gives them a decidedly individual character. It all makes pleasant hearing, but somehow I doubt whether Mme. Jeritza delights her American admirers in this work to the extent that she does her Austrian. Anyhow, she must be an artist of superlative merit, and I once more express the hope that it may not be long before we have an opportunity of judging her in her native element in this country.

Turning now to another theme, I am going to speak of some records that I have quite recently heard on the New Edison. Concerning the machine itself, I fancy there is no need for me to write at length; its peculiar claims and characteristics are doubtless familiar to readers of this magazine. I have not, of course, personally applied its special test of placing the artist beside the machine, to continue the piece *vivâ voce* where the reproduction leaves off, and so compare the two. I could not do this because the recording artists did not happen to be handy for the purpose. But I understand that it has been done, and with results entirely satisfactory to Mr. Thomas Edison. In any case one must be thankful to him for his diamond point reproducer, which obviates the necessity for changing needles, even though it limits its functions to records made specially for the Edison machine. Twelve of these "Re-creations," as they are termed, I shall now proceed to comment upon, premising that the "Heppelwhite" model which played them is said to be surpassed by several larger-sized models from the same laboratory.

The first of these Edison records that I took up was a *Caro nome* by Alice Verlet (82080R), remarkable chiefly for easy, assured singing and neat *fiorituri*. The clearness of the voice is interfered with somewhat by the "scratch," which can be still better overcome, I think, on such a good machine as this. The "scratch" is a nuisance that the listener cannot suppress; but he can avoid the highly-flavoured American description of the plot of *Rigoletto*, with its western pronunciation of Italian names and outside-showman's delivery, by the simple precaution of not playing the reverse side, which is simply wasted on such nonsense. Luckier, therefore, the purchaser of 83079 L., which gives you Carolina Lazzari with one of the big airs from *Samson et Dalila* on each side, in French, in a strong, clear,

sympathetic contralto, well produced and evenly sustained throughout. There is some rich chest tone in *Amour, viens aider*, though the appeal to the Philistine god of love, whoever he may be, is a trifle too *triste* for a Dalila. Both verses of *Mon cœur s'ouvre* are given, and if the G flat were as good as the rest there would be little fault to find. The accompaniments are sonorous, well-balanced, and nicely restrained in all these records. In another example (82213 R.) a not too refined rendering of the flower duet from *Madam Butterfly*, by Marie Rappold and Caroline Lazzari, is backed by Tosti's *Povera Mamma* as sung with characteristic Italian sentimentality by an excellent light baritone, Mario Laurenti. The voices blend agreeably in the duet and they are both well in tune; but there was no need for them to keep so consistently loud throughout. The xylophone effect in the orchestration is prettily done.

Several of the records are by that clever daughter of a clever father, Claudia Muzio, who now sings entirely in America, where, of course, the New Edison mechanical productions all originate. She has a pure soprano of light calibre, with a delicate musical quality that can develop strong dramatic feeling when occasion requires, yet without the slightest forcing or tendency to sharpen. There is a slight tremolo, undoubtedly, but only at certain moments; while the breathing is good, and the voice retains its evenness of texture and colour all through the scale. Being an accomplished vocalist, Signorina Muzio attacks every sort of piece with equal confidence and ability, but sometimes her endeavour to get off the beaten track leads her to very dull, uninteresting spots. For instance, there is little of the real Bellini whom we all love (or ought to love) in the aria *Sorgi, o padre*, from *Bianca and Fernando* (82267 R.), with its lengthy minor introduction for flute and harp accompaniment. This sort of thing can only be likened to *Sonnambula*-and-water. So again, the *Pace, mio Dio* on the other side of the disc, from *La Forza del Destino*, can only represent Verdi at his feeblest, no matter how earnestly and intelligently it be sung. Of the more modern school the singer gives us a familiar but beautiful example in Margherita's prison air, *L'altra Notte*, from Boito's *Mefistofele* (82305 R.), which rôle I have heard her sing with unalloyed pleasure. She sings the pitiful melody with infinite charm and, in conjunction with it the still more modern *Che me ne faccio di vostro castello*, from Giordano's opera *Madame Sans-Gêne*, which meanders on with saccharine sweetness and uninterrupted flow to very excellent orchestration. I prefer to the latter (82247 L.) an excerpt from Ciléa's *Adriana Lecouvreur* called *Io son l'umile ancilla*, which begins almost *parlato*, with graceful flute passages supporting the voice, then broadens out into a most effective

aria. It is extremely well sung, the enunciation of the words is particularly distinct, and the recording (as in most of the records of this selection) appears to me to leave little if anything to be desired. Similar praise may be bestowed on the duet from *Pagliacci*—*Silvio, a quest'ora*—which furnishes material for the reverse side (82247 R.), wherein the voices of Claudia Muzio and Mario Laurenti afford a delightful example of perfect blending and warm, passionate feeling. Neither, I think, could easily be excelled.

With the remainder I must be brief. The famous Lucrezia Bori displays her silvery light soprano with exquisite purity in *Ah! fors' è lui* (82539 R.). She sings faultlessly in tune, with admirably distinct, clear-cut phrasing; refined, not hurried, neatness itself save when there is too much *portamento*; and lacking only a trill and the *Sempre libera* to make it an ideal record.

A capital baritone, Arthur Middleton, imitates good models in a lively rendering of the *Largo al factotum* (82545 R.), executed with abundant spirit and contrast, clear enunciation and a crisp, *staccato* ending to every sentence. A very business-like Figaro, this! Finally, three instrumental records that do not really belong to my province, but assuredly deserve favourable mention, viz., a *Serenade* and a *Hungarian Dance* (82263 R.), played with splendid tone and execution by that fine violinist, Albert Spalding; two piano solos by Rachmaninoff (82187 R.), one the inevitable *Prelude*, from the gifted fingers of the composer and both admirable reproductions; and, lastly, two selections from *Madam Butterfly* (80633 R.), played with much animation, crispness of rhythm, and picturesque instrumental colour by the American Symphony Orchestra.

HERMAN KLEIN.



Selected Records by Popular Vote

THE September Competition deserves a further note to supplement the account of results published on page 200 of the last number. Competitors were making lists of what they considered the twenty best records not included in the Editor's "Gramophone Nights," i.e., records issued during the last eighteen months. Tastes vary, of course, but it may be assumed that none of the records chosen by any competitor is below first class in merit, and those mentioned in the last number are safe investments. It is worth every reader's while to glance through that list again, and also through the following list of records which came next in order of votes.

The *complete* list is not very long considering the wide range of choice. H.M.V. comes first with 118 titles, Columbia second with 64, followed at a distance by Vocalion, 13, and Parlophone, 12. A rough table analysing these records is rather significant:—

	Chamber Orches-			Miscel-		
	Vocal.	Music.	tral.	laneous.	per cent.	per cent.
H.M.V.	37.2	7.6	31.3	23.9		
Columbia	12.5	37.5	40.7	9.3		
Vocalion	38.5	38.5	23.0	—		
Parlophone	25.0	8.3	41.6	25.1		

The reckoning is by works, not by records, the *Ninth Symphony*, for instance, counting the same as *O Paradiso*.

These come next in the voting after the 19 works mentioned before:—

COLUMBIA.—937, 938 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—English String Quartet: *Quartet in E flat* (Haydn).

935 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—London Symphony Orchestra: *The Immortal Hour* (Boughton).

L.1488 (12in., 7s. 6d.).—Norman Allin: *Hagen's Call* and *Hagen's Watch* from *Meistersinger*.

L.1538, 1541 (12in., 7s. 6d. each).—Weingartner conducting the London Symphony Orchestra: *Symphony No. 8* (Beethoven).

L.1545, 1548 (12in., 7s. 6d. each).—Lener Quartet: Mozart's *Quartet in C major*.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D.767-771 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Isolde Menges and the R.A.H. Orchestra: Beethoven's *Concerto, Op. 61*.

D.838 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—R.A.H. Orchestra: *Fantasia in C minor* (Bach-Elgar) and *Overture in D minor* (Handel-Elgar).

D.852 (12in., 6s. 6d.).—R.A.H. Orchestra: *Egmont Overture* (Beethoven).

D.842-849 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Symphony Orchestra and Chorus: Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*.

D.A.555 (10in., 6s.).—Chaliapine: *Madamina from Don Giovanni* (Mozart).

PARLOPHONE.—E.10092 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Bettendorf and Bassth: *Evening Prayer* and *Dance Duet* from *Hansel and Gretel* (Humperdinck).

E.10163 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Bettendorf: *Porgi amor* and *Dove sono* from *Figaro* (Mozart).

BRUNSWICK.—50031 (12in., 8s.).—Huberman: *Capriccio Valse* and *Romance* (Wienawski).

A GRAMOPHONIST'S GUIDE

By PERCY A. SCHOLES

V. Orchestral Piece, Elgar's "Enigma Variations," as played by the Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Edward Elgar, O.M.

[NOTE.—Mr. Scholes's previous articles are on Brahms' "Sonata in D minor, Op. 108"; Debussy's "L'Après-midi d'un Faune"; and the first movement of Vaughan Williams' "London Symphony." The series, which will eventually be incorporated in the "Second Book of the Gramophone Record," is published here by the courtesy of the Oxford University Press.]

Of all Elgar's larger works this is the most widely known. All orchestras in, perhaps, every country play it. It was first played in 1899 (under Richter's conductorship, at the St. James's Hall), and it had an immediate effect in firmly establishing its composer's reputation—

"For my part, I expected nothing from any English composer; and when the excitement about *Gerontius* began, I said wearily, 'Another Wardour Street festival oratorio!' But when I heard the Variations (which had not attracted me to the concert) I sat up and said 'Whew! I knew we had got it at last.'"

The plan of the work is as follows:—

A Tune, called *Enigma*.

Nine Variations upon it.

An Intermezzo.

Three more Variations.

A Finale.

The reason the tune is called *Enigma* is curious. It seems that it is so written that another tune, and one well-known to us all, could be played with it, and even, it is said (though this seems incredible), with each of the variations. What this other tune is, nobody has ever found out, and the composer has already kept his secret for a quarter of a century.

Another interesting thing is the general dedication of the piece, "To my friends pictured within." Each of the variations is preceded by the initials or the nicknames of the friend pictured in it. Elgar himself has said of this—

"It is true that I have sketched, for their amusement and mine, the idiosyncrasies of fourteen of my friends, not necessarily musicians; but this is a personal matter, and need not have been mentioned publicly; the variations should stand simply as a 'piece' of music."

In the following description, by no means every feature of interest is pointed out, but it is thought that as much is given as the ordinary listener will care to look for as the performance proceeds, and further study may be pursued by means of observant listening with the miniature score. The description of the piece, section by section, follows:—

The TUNE (*Andante*, gently moving, 4/4).—Note this carefully, in all its details, as it is played, and become thoroughly familiar with it by several repetitions before proceeding farther, for it offers the clue to all that follows.

It falls into three sentences, as it were—six bars in the minor (strings alone), four bars in the major (strings and wood), and the first six bars repeated much as before, but ending with a major chord, after pausing a moment on which we pass into a whispered (or what should be a whispered) passage that leads into—

VARIATION I. (*L'istesso tempo*, at the same speed, 4/4).—Dedicated to C. A. E., i.e., C. Alice Elgar, the composer's wife. The tune is played very softly by flute and clarinet (doubled by violin and viola, tremolo). Behind this can be heard a quietly moving accompaniment. (Unfortunately the effect in this record is somewhat confused, and tune and accompaniment not so clearly distinguishable as they should be.) At the end of the section the brass gives out the tune. The end is (or should be) very delicate, the clarinet very softly

* G. B. Shaw: *Sir Edward Elgar, Music and Letters*, January, 1920.

playing the opening notes of the tune (put into the major), whilst the strings and a horn accompany.

VARIATION II. (*Allegro*, quick, 3/8).—Dedicated to H. D. S.-P. This is a dainty, light-fingered little three-in-a-bar movement. A rapid run-about theme is treated sometimes in the violins, sometimes in wood wind. A slow triple-time version of the original tune, after a time, appears underneath this in 'cellos and double-basses.

VARIATION III. (*Allegretto*, pretty quickly, 3/8).—Dedicated to R. B. T. A very happy treatment of the tune (again three-in-a-bar), mostly by the wood wind; at the opening the oboe has it, accompanied by the rest of the wood-wind, the strings adding *pizzicato* "pings" (i.e., notes plucked, instead of bowed). A gruff bassoon solo (doubled by 'cello) is at one point a prominent feature.

VARIATION IV. (*Allegro di molto*, at a good quick speed, 3/4).—Dedicated to W. M. B. This gives the tune much in its old original form (but still changed from four-in-a-bar to three-in-a-bar), with a good deal of added force. At the end the full orchestra is playing—with stirring effect (the kettledrums come out here rather unusually clearly—for a gramophone record).

VARIATION V. (*Moderato*, at a moderate speed, 12/8).—Dedicated to R. P. A. (i.e., R. P. Arnold, son of Matthew Arnold.) This is a rather solemn variation. At the opening the tune is heard in the bass, from 'cellos, double basses, and bassoons, the violins (on their low G string) working against this a very serious-minded but beautiful new tune. After a few bars of charming wood-wind, these two tunes again enter, but this time "inverted," the original tune being now above (wood and horns—not so easily heard as it should be) and the new tune below (in all the strings). There is more use of this same material, and then this variation passes without break into—

VARIATION VI. (*Andantino*, gently moving along, 3/2).—Dedicated to Ysobel. At the opening, bits of the Tune are heard in the lower strings (antiphonally, viola, and 'cello), but with the intervals widened (it is said that Ysobel was a tall maiden, and had a bold stride). The bassoon and some of its wood-wind colleagues interject fragmentary thoughts. After a few bars a viola solo is a prominent feature. The last four notes are for viola solo, with a single horn note as accompaniment. This is throughout very much of a viola variation. (Unfortunately the solo and orchestral playing is not always dead in tune, and the tone is not so delicately beautiful as Ysobel and her friends would surely wish.)

VARIATION VII. (*Presto*, rapid, 1).—Dedicated to "Troyte." The kettledrums are the heroes of this

mad, slap-bang variation; playing very vigorously a little figure founded on the opening of the tune, so arranged that the accent falls now on one note, now on another—a good recipe for producing the feeling of restlessness that is sought here.

Presto. $\bullet = 76$



A feature of this variation is a short ascending phrase that begins very softly, works up to a great loudness and then begins again softly; in the middle a version of this phrase is heard thundered out by trombones. Another feature is the brilliant express-speed triplet scale passage work of the strings, and especially of the violins.

This variation bears the unusual time-signature of 1, i.e., one beat in the bar of the value of a semibreve. Near the end the brass alone have a few bars.

VARIATION VIII. (*Allegretto*, at a gentle, rather quick pace, 6/8).—Dedicated to W. N. A very graceful variation, probably the portrait of a lady. Note the two clarinets (running parallel six notes apart) at the opening, joined a bar later by two flutes. A piquant little *motif* of ascending notes trilled by oboe is heard a little later.

VARIATION IX. (*Adagio*, slowly, 3/4).—Dedicated to "Nimrod." "Nimrod" suggests something active; this, however, is a delicately poetic variation, the name being a fanciful translation of that of the late Mr. A. E. Jaeger, of Messrs. Novello, a gentle person and an enthusiastic Elgarian. This variation begins very softly and solemnly in the strings alone. It is throughout very dignified, yet full of feeling. Unfortunately it is not played with quite all the delicacy the music demands, and the one "cut" of the whole set of records occurs here, robbing us of a noble passage of twelve bars full orchestra, and very much spoiling the effect of the variation. As it closes we feel that the first portion of the work is at an end.*

After a moment's pause we make a fresh start with—

VARIATION X.: INTERMEZZO (*Allegretto*, at a gentle, rather quick pace, 3/4).—Dedicated to "Dorabella." This can barely be called a "variation," as it makes little reference to the tune. It is fairy-like in its delicacy. Muted strings and wood-wind give out little chirps and twitters, and then there creeps in a soft viola solo. Keen listeners may care to look out for a passage where the flutes are heard in

* Hearing the *Enigma Variations* once in Rome, I found in the programme a statement that this one was "dedicated to the celebrated English organist, Nimrod."

their low rich register, in which their tone colour is very distinct from that of their upper notes. This *Intermezzo* is of fair length, and is, indeed, quite a piece in itself.

VARIATION XI. (*Allegro di molto*, at a good rapid pace, 2/2).—Dedicated to G. R. S. (i.e., the late Dr. Sinclair of Hereford Cathedral; note how his active organ pedalling is suggested almost throughout in passages given to 'cellos, double basses, and bassoons. (These passages will be found upon observation to be derived from the opening of the original theme.) G. R. S. was a fine musician, full of energy and enterprise, and his character is suggested in this variation.

VARIATION XII. (*Andante*, gently moving along, 4/4).—Dedicated to B. G. N. A solo 'cello begins, and the other 'cellos then join it. Perhaps B. G. N. was a 'cellist. Without a break we pass into—

VARIATION XIII. : ROMANZA (*Moderato*, moderately quickly, 3/4).—Dedicated to *** (said to be Lady Mary Lygon). The original tune is not much alluded to here. This piece is supposed to represent a seascape, for *** was on a voyage when it was written. A clarinet solo of two bars long opens the piece. Then the violins take up this little bit of tune, and after them the flute and oboe.

Look out for a fine effect a bar or two later. Lower strings play very softly, and with them the kettledrum (this last so softly as barely to be heard, yet subtly influencing the tone of the passage). Above this comes a little clarinet tune, of a few descending notes, which Elgar, in his score, has placed in inverted commas. It is a quotation from Mendelssohn's *Calm Sea and Prosperous Voyage* Overture.



VARIATION XIV. : FINALE (*Allegro*, quick, 4/4).—Dedicated to E. D. U. This is a very elaborate piece of some length. In its course there appear memories of some of the earlier variations. In the middle is what we may call a Beethoven touch—a sudden break after a loud passage, and a resumption with a throbbing rhythm upon the lower strings, over which soon creeps in a wood-wind tune in different rhythm from what has gone before, against which are heard some very soft percussion effects. It is all very unexpected, and very direct in its manner.

(From figure 68 in the score to figure 70, a passage of nineteen bars, is in this record repeated.)

The following comment by Edwin Evans, upon

national feeling as exemplified in these variations, may be of interest:—

"The presence of characteristically English qualities in Elgar's music has been challenged by critics from abroad, and more recently in one of our own musical strongholds, and the challenge has been consistently taken up by Elgar's staunchest champion. But the dispute arises undoubtedly through a misconception. Although there exists undoubtedly an idiom in music which, whether by association or otherwise, conveys the immediate impression of an English origin—an idiom which Elgar has seldom if ever used—it is not by idiom alone that national characteristics are conveyed. These variations, dedicated 'To my friends pictured within,' are portraits limned in a musical medium of which the theme is the simplest expression. The medium itself is neither German nor English. It is merely European. But the type of friendship underlying these portraits is much more characteristic. More than once continental authors have endeavoured to discover and record the secret of our friendships, in which so much is taken for granted that their expression can be quite safely reduced to cabalistic terms, or seasoned with a pinch of railing. The Englishman has been told that he is inarticulate, when it is nearer the truth to say that in certain relations he does not feel the need of words. And the Englishman's chaff would quickly undermine most friendships made on the Continent. One could not assert that Elgar has been inarticulate in these variations, nor could one regard them as banter. To him the mission of music is, perhaps, too serious to permit of it, though he has his full share of the national sense of fun. But the feeling that pervades this work is friendship of the kind that not only tolerates, but thrives upon both inarticulateness and banter. That, although maybe not a national monopoly, is at least a pronounced characteristic, and Elgar, in the glow of uneffusive affection, has portrayed it with as much success as, no doubt, he has portrayed the friends concerned."

"The work belongs to the most interesting period of Elgar's career, after he had found himself, and before official honours had found him. It may be that, since then, he has written works more instinct with that nobility which, where music is concerned, some critics prefer to mere humanity. But he has written nothing more human, nothing more full of vitality and of spirited independence since the Variations, and some works more or less contemporary with them."

A complete reproduction of this noble work is a valuable household possession. This is not a bad one; nor is it a good one, and there are moments that make one wonder why the composer passed the records as satisfactory. One hesitates to say that the conducting is at fault, for one has heard many performances directed by the composer (as this one is) which were very much better. There is a lack of delicacy in many places, and a lack of subtlety almost everywhere. Such music demands first-rate recording and is worth any amount of trouble to obtain it. The acute point of one's grievance is precisely this—that these are records one cannot afford to be without.

On the back of the last of the four records is *Fan Ballet, The Sanguine Fan*. This is a relic of a war-charity production at Chelsea in 1917; it is of no particular importance.

Four large double-sided H.M.V. Records, D.578, 582, 602, 596. *Fan Ballet* on D.596.

PERCY A. SCHOLES.

THE MUSICAL BOX

By LOIS GRAHAM

THE sun streamed in at the window of a whitewashed cottage in Northern Italy. It shone full into the shrivelled brown face of a little old woman seated at her mid-day meal.

Her eyes filled, and two drops fell upon a letter that lay in her lap.

She rose, wiping her eyes with her apron, and pulled a green shutter aslant, till the room was a pattern of striped shadows.

She sat down to read the letter once more, and, in spite of the shutter, her eyes filled again. Then she laid her head upon her arms and her lean little shoulders shook.

The letter was written in Italian. It was short, and was headed by the address of a fashionable London hotel.

"Dear Mother," it said, "You will be surprised to hear that I am coming home for a few days next week. Please do not put yourself to any inconvenience. You know that I do not mind what we call in England 'roughing it'! It will only be for a day or so, as I am really too busy to stay more. However, it will be delightful to get a glimpse of you.—Yours,

GIUSEPPE.

"P.S.—I am bringing you a small present."

Ten years ago Giuseppe Belloni had left home, his only assets ambition and a voice. To-day his name was known in all the big cities of the world.

Twice during those ten years he had come back. Once upon the death of his father, when a horrible fear that his mother would wish him to stay with her had been fortunately dispelled by her constant assurances that his career was now all that she had to interest her. And because he wanted to believe her, he pretended that he thought it was true.

He had written. Yes, but not often. Five or six times a year. Little hurried notes, full of his plans, his successes, and perhaps enclosing a sheaf of English press notices, which he had forgotten that she could not read.

If he had guessed how on the nights following those days she had often laid awake till morning crying, perhaps he would have made them less impersonal, and would have remembered that himself and not his career was what really belonged to her.

At these times she would lie to herself, saying that she wept from happiness at his success, and not from grief at his loss. For she had lost him—completely. Then she would try to remember him

as he had left her, full of youthful enthusiasm, but sad to go, for in those days he had loved her. But she could see him only as a great man, belonging to the world so much more than to her, and on his two short visits, glossing over the little discomforts of her simple ménage. So kind—so horribly and graciously kind!

And now he was coming again!

She wiped her eyes, and her hands trembled a little as she smoothed back her thin grey hair. Bravely she set about her preparations. There was much to be done. For she had every intention of "putting herself to inconvenience."

The next day she walked the four miles to the nearest town, and there willingly, eagerly she spent every lira of her little store of savings. A new coverlet for his bed, a pillow-case of finest linen (on his last visit he had complained of sleeplessness because of the rough cotton which was all that she had had to give him), yes, and table-napkins! Oh, how ashamed she had been when he had exclaimed at the absence of them! Some scented soap, too, and a fine linen towel. "How much?... Oh!... No only *one*, thank you!" (She could wash and iron it, and he would never know!) And so on, until the few lire that she had promised herself to hire a cab for the return journey had gone with the rest into the shopman's till, and she had had to walk.

Three days later Maria Belloni sat outside her cottage door dressed in her best. The villagers stood about in little knots gossiping, for they knew for whom she waited.

From time to time she would jump from her chair and hurry indoors to assure herself that this or that was in order. Then she would compose herself again, spreading out her full green skirt and black apron with her wrinkled hands. Her eyes, deep and dark and strangely untouched by age, stared widely up the bend in the road round which he would come, and in them was a look of fear.

* * *

Heat and dust, chattering voices, and a smell of garlic were the chief impressions made upon the mind of Giuseppe Belloni as he waited impatiently for the staff of the little Italian station to give him the undivided attention that he was accustomed to receive.

The staff, ticket collector, booking clerk, and porter, all embodied in the person of one none too energetic rustic, was busy. It was market day,

and the usually deserted station was filled with chattering peasants.

Giuseppe mentally collected his luggage. Two suit-cases, yes, there they were, a roll of rugs, and . . . Dio mio ! where was the crate ? After all his trouble of bringing it . . . now it was lost !

He rushed wildly up the little platform, heedless of the shrugged shoulders, and pointed fingers that followed him, till he espied one corner of it peeping from beneath the voluminous skirts of two farmers' wives, seated gossiping over the day's bargains.

Bows and apologies were followed by the appearance of the "staff." A moment later Giuseppe was enduring further tortures from the stifling, acrid smell of the local cab.

To-day was Tuesday. . . . He supposed he must stay till Friday. Oh, well, it was the poor little woman's only pleasure !

The cab jolted round a bend in the road, and he saw Maria, one hand at her breast, and with the other steadyng herself against the cottage wall.

He jumped out, kissed her hurriedly, argued with the driver about the fare, waited for someone to remove his luggage, but finding no one appeared, was obliged to do it himself. The crate was heavy, so Maria took one side, and between them they carried it into the house.

The removal of many wrappings disclosed the shining cover of a small gramophone, and a few moments later Maria, her dark eyes wide with wonder, heard the great Giuseppe Belloni singing to the accompaniment of the finest orchestra in the world. Record after record she listened to, while Giuseppe strode round and round the room, with a smile of satisfaction on his face, and her heart sank as she thought of the little meal that she had prepared for him with such care, burning to a cinder in the oven. And later when he complained she had not the heart to explain.

The two days that followed were spent by Maria in loving little attentions, graciously accepted by Giuseppe as his due. The third day she thought that she felt some subtle change in him, a manner less exacting, even some shyly offered suggestions of help. He seemed to have grown younger and more simple, and she saw glimpses, little fleeting ones, of the times she had tried to remember. Then she would feel a wild passion of jealousy, that they, the outside world, had stolen him, and would pretend to herself that some day she would cheat them, and keep him with her in the village for always.

When her work was over they would sit in the tiny garden behind her cottage, and he would sing to her, while the villagers would gather in little groups in the road to listen. Maria had much to say to him, and often when he sang she would long to interrupt with questions about his life, his friends, so that when he had gone again she could

picture him. But he seemed happiest when he sang, so she would fetch her knitting and sit in silence.

After a while the little cottage was named by the village "La Scatola Armonica" . . . the Musical Box, for if Giuseppe was not singing himself, he would put upon the gramophone record after record of his own voice.

"Belloni would surely sing upon his death-bed !" they would say.

He was to leave upon the Friday, but that morning he had announced that he would stay one day more.

Maria told herself that she was glad. She had made him happy, that was all that counted ! She herself ? . . . Was she happy ? . . . Well, what mattered ? And when she dusted her tiny room and felt the little china pot where she kept her savings so light as she lifted it, and missed the comfortable tinkle of the silver lire, "What mattered ?" she would bravely say again, "so long as I have made him happy ?"

The next morning the village was early astir. Chattering, excited peasants rushed into each other's cottages with tales of illness, and sleepless nights of pain, to be met with news of the same.

The next day there was hardly a house that did not hold a victim. By nightfall there were few which did not contain a coffin.

The local doctor, young and full of enthusiasm, worked until he fell asleep while he examined the heart of a patient, and then wired to Milan for help. And in the little shop of the undertaker could be heard the ceaseless tap, tap of his hammer upon the rough coffins that he made in haste. As he worked his face was furrowed with grief, for many that he made were for his friends.

Some said that the epidemic came from water tainted by the opening of a factory upon the hill, others hinted at some infection left by a travelling circus that had passed through after camping for one night in the village. But the doctors did not know, and not knowing, they were working on their treatment in the dark.

The symptoms were a high fever, lasting from twelve to fourteen hours, a racking of the limbs with pain, and then the crisis, a spasm of the throat, and, in most cases, death. In a few of the slighter cases the fever abated and there was no crisis, and then the patient's recovery was as sudden as his attack. After twelve hours of patient research the doctor from Milan discovered an injection which, if given at the moment of the spasm, produced relief, and in many cases the patient recovered. But it was impossible for him to be with every case at the moment that he was needed. He and the local doctor worked together all the day, at nights taking in turns four hours' work and four hours' rest.

Giuseppe was one of the first to fall ill. In the

early morning he had wakened Maria, and she had run for the doctor.

He had been very reassuring. It had all the appearances of one of the slighter cases, but he would call again at seven without fail.

All day long Maria sat in Giuseppe's room, only leaving it to fetch for him the things that he needed. Her own meals she put aside as unimportant, and Giuseppe did not notice.

He was a bad patient, restless, nervous and despondent, and as the day went on the fever seemed to increase. Maria would beg him to try and sleep, and though he scoffed at the idea as impossible, towards evening he slept.

Maria too had dozed, when she was wakened by a strangled sound, to find Giuseppe with one hand clutching at his throat, and the other groping before him as though blindly seeking for help.

Distracted, she rushed for water and held it to his lips, but he could not swallow. Pathetic in her tortured ignorance, she kissed his grey lips, and with a corner of her apron tenderly wiped the moisture from his forehead.

She glanced at the clock. Five minutes to seven! The doctor had said seven. Oh, Santa Maria! that he would come soon! Then he could give the . . . what was it they called it? . . . the *puntura*, the injection, yes!

Gently she held one of Giuseppe's hands between hers, and when in his agony he gripped her fingers till her own pain was hard to bear, she made no sound.

Then for a moment he seemed easier. He gasped out a question, "When would the doctor come?" and she told him, "Soon, very soon!" How could she help him to pass the agony of waiting?

Then an idea came to her. She ran down the little winding stair to the kitchen, and with an effort that seemed to tear each muscle in her frail old body, she slowly carried upstairs the heavy gramophone, and soon the little room was filled with the sound of the opening notes of his favourite song. Then she sat again by the bed, with her eyes upon the clock.

Ten minutes passed, and though Maria strained her ears for footsteps, she could hear no sound but the quick breathing of Giuseppe, and the grinding of the needle upon the finished record.

She should stop the gramophone, she knew that! Giuseppe had so often told her! But during its playing he had reached for her hand and was holding it pressed to his face . . . just as he used to in the times when he was hers, the times she had tried to remember. So she stayed where she was, and the record ground on.

* * *

Down the winding street the two doctors walked with the rolling steps of fatigue.

One of them pulled a little note-book from his pocket and looked at his watch.

"Seven o'clock, yes. Belloni next," he said, "I told them I'd look in at seven, though his promised to be a slight case. Poor old Pedro Cassari is in a bad way, I must see him as soon as I can."

They walked a few steps and neither spoke, till one stopped and pulled at the other's sleeve. "Senta . . . Listen!" he said.

A soft wind blew in their faces, and faintly borne upon it they heard the tap, tap of the undertaker's hammer, and, fainter still, but unmistakable, the sound of Belloni's voice singing.

"Oh, well, that's good!" said one of them, "I thought he'd be better by to-night. It's astonishing how quickly these slight cases recover! I'll go to poor old Pedro first now, and look in at Maria Belloni's about eight." And they turned and retraced their steps up the hill.

* * *

At ten minutes to eight Giuseppe Belloni died.

Punctually at eight the doctor from Milan knocked upon Maria Belloni's door, and receiving no answer, knocked again. Still silence, so he pushed it open, walked across the little kitchen, and ran softly up the stairs.

Upon the bed Belloni lay with a look of peace upon his dead face, and seated on a low stool beside him, with her head resting upon the edge of his pillow, Maria slept the deep sleep of exhaustion.

A string of unanswerable questions rushed through his mind. When? . . . How? . . . Why had he died? seeing that but an hour ago he had heard him singing!

Then, turning, he saw the gramophone, and his face paled. He understood! . . . And in his rage he tore the record from its place, and muttering a curse, he broke it in two, and threw the pieces upon the floor.

They clattered as they fell, and he glanced anxiously at Maria, fearing that he had wakened her. But she still slept on.

His anger had spent itself, and being a devout Catholic, he crossed himself, knelt to say a prayer for the soul of the dead man, and went patiently about his work.

* * *

And now every day, when Maria's work is over and her cottage tidy and neat, she climbs up the little hill to the graveyard, and there upon the low wall beside Giuseppe's grave she sits as though waiting. From time to time she smiles as she spreads out her full green skirt and black apron with her wrinkled hands.

In her eyes, deep and dark, and strangely untouched by age, is a look of peace.

TESTS OF PIANOFORTE RECORDS

[The following communication from Mr. Hunter Blair needs no comment except a word of thanks. We are satisfied that it represents the considered judgment of three competent judges, that it has been undertaken in a leisurely and thorough manner, and that, since every one of the records in the Brunswick, Columbia and H.M.V. catalogues has been exhaustively tested—not once or twice, but often as many as fifteen times—the results may be accepted by our readers with a good deal more confidence than the opinions of those who have not heard all the records issued or who have been obliged to form hasty judgments.—ED.]

CONDITIONS OF TEST.

THE test was carried out by three gentlemen—Dr. Otto Dohr, a pianoforte teacher of some eminence in America, Mr. Karl Maszkerisky, formerly first violin in an important symphony orchestra in Vienna, and Mr. J. W. Hunter Blair, who, while he makes no claim to such eminence as the other two gentlemen, has spent a very considerable portion of his time in the study of music, particularly in research work, has undergone the usual musical education for a pianoforte player and composer, and has also for some years made a special study of pianoforte records, of which he has a large collection. Dr. Dohr and Mr. Maszkerisky were also much interested in the gramophone, and when the three judges came to inspect their joint collection of pianoforte records, they found that by a small expenditure they could include in it every record in the H.M.V., Columbia, and Brunswick catalogues. This was done; and the test was carried out on the most searching lines. New records of each piece were heard at a dealer's, and the record in their collection was tested for wear and surface noises. The judging was carried out by a system of marking, divided into nine heads for each record, and ranging from the merit of the performance to the wearing qualities of the wax. A certain number of the records were tested by two judges only, but whenever this occurred, the third judge always heard the record several times at a dealer's and judged of its capabilities there as far as possible. The judges are fortunate in that not only have they heard every one of the recording pianists many times, but in very many cases they have heard the pianist play the actual piece recorded, which enabled them to estimate much more correctly the merits of the reproduction. A large number of sound-boxes were accumulated for the test, but after about thirty records had been tried the judges were able to say at once which sound-box would be the most suitable for any given record, and afterwards only two or three were used. The judges wish to point out that the Columbia piano reproduction is quite different from the Brunswick and H.M.V., and needs a different type of sound-box to achieve good results.

Below is a list of the sound-boxes, with the marks allotted for each type of reproduction.

It will be seen that we have awarded highest place to the Jewel. The chief reason for this is its extraordinary beauty and delicacy of tone in pianoforte records. The tone, however, is not loud, and if the room is large, or more volume of tone is desired, we strongly recommend Nos. 1, 3 and 4 on the list, or the Clifophone Gramophone complete. A good illustration of the Jewel's tone will be found in the record of the Bach-Busoni choral prelude *Nun freut euch* (Col. L.1470), a marvel of playing and of reproduction. The marks we have allotted are, of course, entirely concerned with pianoforte reproduction.

Name.	Maker.	SOUND-BOXES.			Maximum marks :—10.
		H.M.V.	Columbia	Brunswick	
H.M.V., No. 2 .	Gramophone Co., Ltd., Hayes	9 ..	5 ..	8	
Do., Exhibition	Do.	6 ..	4 ..	5	
Columbia No. 7	Columbia Graphophone Co., Clerkenwell Rd., E.C.	7 ..	10 ..	7	
Kestraphone ..	Kestraphone Co., Ltd., Waterloo Chambers, Firvale Rd., Bournemouth	9 ..	6 ..	9	
Lenthall ..	Lenthall Gramophones, Ltd., 51, Fountain St., Manchester	7 ..	4 ..	6	
Astra ..	Gramophone Exchange, 29, New Oxford St., W.C.2	6 ..	7 ..	6	
B.R.O.S. ..	A. J. Rice, 133, London Rd., Brighton	7 ..	5 ..	7	
Tremusa ..	Repeating Gramophones, Ltd., 102, New Bond St., W.1	6 ..	6 ..	6	
Jewel ..	Jewel Soundbox Co., U.S.A.	8 ..	9 ..	9	
Kingcott ..	S. Acott, High Street, Oxford	7 ..	4 ..	6	
Mellomac ..	H. A. McInnes, 46, Lonsdale Rd., Oxford	6 ..	7 ..	8	
Ultone ..	Melodia Ltd., Dacre House, Dacre St., Westminster, S.W.1	8 ..	5 ..	6	
Clifophone (Gramophone)	Chappell & Co., 50, New Bond St., W.1	8 ..	7 ..	10	

Gramophones used :—Columbia, H.M.V. and Clifophone Cabinet Models.

Needles used :—Columbia and H.M.V. loud, medium and soft; Trumpeter, Duplex and Arrow; Chromic and Sympathetic Chromic; H.M.V. fibre.

The above marks represent the average of the marks we gave to each record of the three makes. We do not suggest that all the

records of one make will sound best with one particular box, but as a general rule we find the above table correct. We do not expect everyone to agree with us, but we have no axe to grind, and have put down exactly our conclusions after what is after all a pretty severe test.

REPORT ON PIANOFORTE RECORDS.

Backhaus.

The old Backhaus records were extremely fine. The tone in D.183, Chopin's *C major Etude* (Op. 10, No. 7) and the *D flat Valse*, was superb. The new records comprise the everlasting and inevitable *Liebesträume*, a dull waltz by Delibes, and a couple of uninteresting arrangements. We hope for something better in future.

Busoni.

These records are all good, but are inclined to show signs of wear early. The *Rhapsody*, despite its double side, is a good deal cut but the tone is pleasing and clear. Any one will give satisfaction, though it is a pity that out of only four records Busoni should have chosen to record the same piece twice (*Etude in G flat*, Op. 10).

Una Bourne.

Pleasant little trifles of drawing-room music are provided by Miss Bourne. The inevitable Chaminade features largely; of greater interest are the two Spanish records, B.1689 and B.1700, devoted to Cervantes and Albeniz respectively. There is also a Bohemian polka by Smetana on B.1738.

First place :—

- B.1689. *Six Cuban Dances* (Cervantes).
- B.1700. *Spanish Suite* (Albeniz).

Cortot.

These records are in the main extremely good. Besides DB.168, to which we have allotted first place, especially worthy of mention are the two Chopin *G flat Etudes* (DA.145) and Ravel's *Jeux d'Eau* (DB.643). The latter has on the reverse Liszt's *La Legerezza*, the scales and arpeggios in which are very clear. Very attractive as music are the two Spanish dances of Albeniz (DA.144). The new *Children's Corner Suite* provide an excellent contrast of what the gramophone can and cannot do in the way of piano recording. The *Children's Corner* itself records admirably; *La Cathedrale Engloutie* is a lamentable failure. To anyone who has heard M. Cortot play this prelude, the contrast will be particularly glaring. The gramophone cannot convey subtlety—or the bass notes of a piano—as this piece demands.

First place :—

- DA.168. *Invitation to the Waltz* (Weber).
- Concert Paraphrase. Rigoletto.*
- (Verdi-Liszt.)

Second place :—

- DB.678. First part of *Children's Corner Suite* (Debussy) (especially *The Snow is Dancing*).

De Greef.

Particularly noteworthy for the orchestral works in which he has participated. The Grieg *A minor Concerto* is most striking when played with a Lenthall sound-box. The difference that this particular box makes is almost incredible. It is badly cut, especially the last movement. The last half-dozen pages of the score record extremely well, and we have often heard the work sound far less impressive in actual performance. The César Franck *Variations Symphoniques* record admirably, but need a careful test with sound-boxes before their full beauty becomes apparent. They are cut to an extent which appears to us unnecessary, and the records are inclined to sound abrupt, at any rate, to one closely familiar with this very beautiful work. The *Hungarian Fantasia* is good also, the orchestra providing an adequate background. The Saint-Saëns *Concerto*, which is for some reason one of the most popular of all works for piano and orchestra, is fairly good, though the piano part lacks depth, and the opening bars have none of that sonorous tone which is really the whole point of them. The playing is good without being inspired. The work is considerably cut. A most delightful record, which appears to be little known, is D.49, the *Finale* from *Faschingswank aus Wien* on one side and the *Arabesque* on the other (both by Schumann). The playing is admirable, and the tone good and rich. To anyone wishing a change from Chopin we heartily commend this. The new 12th *Hungarian Rhapsody* is well reproduced, but the playing seems to be lacking in power. The remainder is uninteresting; the Moszkowski *Serenade* (D.655) sounds like a bad pianola.

First place :—

- D.551, 552. *Concerto in A minor* (Grieg) with orchestra.
- D.697, 698. *Variations Symphoniques* (Franck).
- D.49 *Carnival's Jest from Vienna* (Schumann) *Arabesque* (Schumann) solo.

De Pachmann.

These records are very variable. The best perhaps is the *Ballade in A flat* (H.M.V. D.262). This is the second half only, but it is very clear, and brings out Pachmann's conception of Chopin. L.1009 on Columbia is very good, particularly as regard the *Impromptu*; L.1112 is also charming, the Chopin especially revealing some of the beauty of tone for which Pachmann is so famous. D.265 on H.M.V. is attractive, but thin in tone; the

Spinning Song is the best of the four short pieces on this record. The H.M.V. records are all rather thin, except for the *Ballade*, which is surprisingly full and rich.

First place :—

H.M.V. D.262. *Ballade in A flat* (Chopin).
Etude in E minor (Chopin).

Second place :—

Col. L.1112. *Mazurka in C, Etude in F*
(Chopin).
La Fileuse (Raff-Henselt).

Arthur Friedheim (Columbia).

The tone of these records is by no means bad. The *Moonlight Sonata* has one double-sided record. The second movement is omitted altogether and, by dint of a very small label, the pianist seems to have succeeded in compressing the whole of the last movement on to one side. Although it cannot be regarded as such an adequate rendering as Lamond's, it has certain distinct advantages. For one thing, it is 8s. 6d. cheaper, and the fact of being able to get the whole of the *presto* on to one side leaves a far greater sense of smoothness and proportion than does Lamond's which, it must be confessed, appears singularly lopsided with its sudden break in the middle. Our own copy emitted the most extraordinary squeaks and scrapes when new, but these soon disappeared. The *Rhapsody* is clear, but the unfortunate effect of the gramophone upon the piano makes the second part sound more like a street hurdy-gurdy than ever. The *Moto Perpetuo* is poor and by no means equal to the brilliant rendering by Moiseivitch on H.M.V.

Percy Grainger.

The best of these records is L.1441, Liszt's *Polonaise in E*. The second half, including the *Cadenza*, is absolutely staggering; we can use no other term. Grainger is a superb Liszt player; having all heard him in the flesh several times, we were particularly curious to know what the gramophone would do for him. The result, in this piece, at any rate, certainly exceeded our expectations. In the high notes of the *Cadenza*, every note is as clear as crystal. To get the proper effect, it is absolutely essential to use a "hard" sound-box; the Columbia is the best, but with a "romantic" box the effect is apt to be woolly. His earlier records do not reach the same standard. The *Hungarian Fantasy* is excellent as regards the piano but the orchestra is dreadful; it sounds like a schoolboy's band of combs and tissue paper, though the wood-wind, when audible, is good. The second half is better than the first, and the climax is superb. His method of playing the *A flat Polonaise* is unusual, but distinctly impressive, and is a remarkable example of rhythmical treat-

ment. The *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* is not as clear as it might be, but this is obviously the fault of the recording. The H.M.V. records are too old to be of much interest, though the Debussy *Toccata* is instructive.

First place :—

Col. L.1441. *Polonaise in E* (Liszt).

Godowsky.

Columbia.—These records are old and muffled in tone. The best is L.1095, the *C sharp minor Waltz* being delightfully played.

Brunswick.—Not nearly so good as the Hofmann records. The *Polonaise in A flat* is hard and clangy, and the two Chopin-Liszt pieces are lacking in delicacy and resonance.

Mark Hambourg.

To Mr. Hambourg we owe a deep debt of gratitude, for he has provided us with a most interesting and eclectic series of records. Although we may often disagree with his interpretations, we cannot but thank him for his admirable selections, the more so as he appears to have a very fine recording touch. The most striking of his records is undoubtedly the *Fantasia Baetica* of De Falla, which is not only a considerable feat of virtuosity, but also a very lucid exposition of a by no means facile piece of music. Another delightful record is D.644, his Couperin and his Ravel being equally well conceived. D.580 bears a fine rendering of Chopin's beautiful *Polonaise in C minor*. We are surprised to note, in the 1924 H.M.V. catalogue, the disappearance of the Bach-D'Albert *Prelude* and *Fugue in D*, arranged on a d.s. 12-inch from the Organ Works. Bach records are far too scarce to be whisked away like this, and we hope that we may see its return. The first movement of the *Italian Concerto* is another attractive item (D.65). A most interesting combination is D.69—Rachmaninoff, Scriabine and Debussy. An unusual and charming record is D.692, containing two delightful pieces by Dr. Blow and Dr. Arne. The 10-inch records, which are all old, are inclined to be tinny.

First place :—

D.644. *Les Barricades Mysterieuses.*
Le Carillon de Cythere
(Couperin).
Ondine (Ravel).

D.766. *Fantasia Baetica* (De Falla).

Hofmann.

Columbia.—These records are not very good. There is a curious muffled sound about them, as though the piano were too far away from the recording instrument, and they wear out very quickly.

The best is L.1392, Chopin's *Berceuse* and *Valse in A flat*, L.1393, Mendelssohn's *Hunting Song*, and Moszkowski's *La Jongleuse* is good also. From an instructional point of view, we can strongly recommend L.1092, an admirable presentation of two unfortunate and much belaboured pieces; the tone of the *Polonaise*, however, is hardly clear enough.

Brunswick.—Very good indeed. The best in our opinion is the *Pastorale* and *Capriccio* of Scarlatti. The *Hungarian Rhapsody* may be thought to be out of tune at the beginning of part two. This is probably a fault in the recording, for a piano cannot go out of tune and then back into tune in the course of the same piece.

First place :—

Brunswick. 50035. *Pastorale and Capriccio* (Scarlatti).
Magic Fire Spell (Wagner).

Columbia. L.1392. *Berceuse* (Chopin).
Valse in A flat (Chopin).

Lamond.

The least successful of these records, we think, are those of the *Appassionata Sonata*. It is not a piece of music suited to the reproduction of the gramophone. The thunderous roar of the piano becomes an angry thumping, and the sonority upon which the majesty of the music depends is inevitably lost. The records will not stand up for long to a loud needle, and if they be played with a soft needle the whole point of the music is lost. The best records are the two 10-inch records of the last two movements of the *Sonata in F* (Op. 10, No. 2). These are wholly delightful, of excellent tone, and as clear as crystal. Another excellent record is that of the *Minuet* from the *Sonata*, Op. 31, No. 3. This sonata is Mr. Lamond's special favourite, and we hope that we may soon have records of a complete performance by him. The *Moonlight Sonata* is most successful in the middle movement. The first is inclined to sound muffled, and the finale suffers from the same fault as the *Appassionata*, though to a less degree. The Liszt *D flat Etude* is also somewhat lacking in clarity, especially in the treble. The *Emperor Concerto* is remarkably good, though the piano does not stand out quite enough from the orchestra. As an educational work, it is invaluable.

First place :—

E.247. *1 Sonata in F* (Op. 10, No. 2).
E.250. *1 Second and Third Movements* (Beethoven).

Moiseiwitsch.

Mr. Moiseiwitsch has evidently a very successful recording touch, and there is a noteworthy absence of the "broken string" effect so conspicuous on

some records. The best is D.735, the *Perpetuum Mobile* from Weber's *C major Sonata* being remarkably clear and beautifully played. His playing of Debussy's *Jardins sous la Pluie* is delightful (D.59). An interesting pair is D.96, Brahms' *B minor Capriccio* and Scriabine's *Nocturne* for the left hand. Very brilliant and sparkling, though a little thin in tone, are the two Schumann pieces on E.265. With the exception of this, the 10-inch records are poor in quality. He has selected music which is admirably suited, on the whole, to gramophone reproduction, and consequently his records are distinctly pleasing.

First place :—

D.735. *Impromptu in F sharp* (Chopin).
Perpetuum Mobile (Weber).

Second place :—

D.59. *Jardins sous la Pluie* (Debussy).
Clair de Lune (Debussy).

William Murdoch.

Nearly all of the pieces which this pianist has recorded have unfortunately been duplicated by other artists with a wider reputation, and perhaps a greater following. The best records are the two Beethoven ones, L.1413, containing the last two movements of the *Sonata Pathétique*, and L.1544, the *G major Sonata* (Op. 49, No. 2). The latter in particular, which calls for finish and delicacy rather than any great power of conception, is admirably suited to this pianist. The tone is good in all the records, especially in the Gluck-Brahms *Gavotte* (L.1359).

First place :—

L.1544. *Sonata in G* (Op. 49, No. 2)
(Beethoven).

Second place :—

L.1413. *Sonata Pathétique* (last two movements) (Beethoven).

Paderewski.

Nearly all these records are excellent. The chief exception is Schumann's *Aufschwung*, which is really hideous on this record. There is a kind of enraged banging about it which is most distressing. The music he has chosen to record is nearly all hackneyed in the extreme. Of a remarkably fine and clear tone is DB.375, the *Polonaise in A* and the *F sharp Nocturne* of Chopin. The *C sharp minor Valse* and Schumann's *Warum* make another pleasant pair on DB.374. The *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* is clear, but lacking in depth. It sounds as though the piano were talking through its nose! The Couperin is also charmingly played (DB.377). One needs to throw off the experience and sophistication of a good many years before one can be really enthusiastic about the pieces he plays, but for those

who like them they are all interesting as interpretations by one of the world's greatest pianists, and the recording is almost universally good.

First place :—

DB.375. *Polonaise in A major* (Chopin).
Nocturne in F sharp (Chopin).

Pouishnoff.

Good and clear, without being particularly striking. The tone is distinct, and free from unpleasant noises.

Rachmaninoff.

H.M.V.—Though the needle-cut records made by this great pianist are perhaps not so fine as the Edison discs, they are nevertheless most interesting, and of good tone. First and foremost, let us put forward DA.370, which bears the world-famous *Prelude in C sharp minor*. We strongly commend the record to all the assassins of this unhappy piece as the only authoritative rendering. They will find, probably to their dismay, that the middle part goes far, far more quickly than they ever imagined, more quickly than the stately renderings of Hofmann on Columbia or Brunswick, more quickly than the sentimental maunderings of Miss Marie Novello on Winner, much more quickly than they or their neighbours could ever play it. Let us hope that it will induce them to leave the mangled victim to those who can play it properly, and such performers are not too common. Rachmaninoff's playing is always original, yet never iconoclastic. One always looks forward to a recital by him, for one can be sure of hearing some very old friends presented in a very new light, but causing surprise and pleasure instead of irritation and annoyance. This quality is apparent in some of his records. The *Golliwog's Cakewalk* (DA.369) and Mendelssohn's *Spinning Song* (DA.370) are both played in an original and delightful way. The amount of humour he manages to extract out of the *Spinning Song* is remarkable. On the reverse of the *Cakewalk* is No. 1 of the same suite, and the record may be commended to those who do not wish or cannot afford to invest in the complete set by Cortot. DB.410 bears two other of his own preludes—the G minor with its infectious march rhythm, and the delicate G major, in which the tone is pure and clear. Daquin's *Le Coucou* is also charmingly played. All the records may be strongly recommended as perfect models of clear, rhythmical playing; the recording is very good throughout.

Edison.—The most important contribution here is the *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* of Liszt, on three sides. It needs a superhuman effort to make this war-worn veteran sound original, but Rachmaninoff may be said to succeed, particularly in the third

part, where he has introduced a very striking cadenza of his own (of course in the place indicated by Liszt). There is another rendering of the C sharp minor prelude on 82187, with W. Rachmaninoff's amusing little polka on the reverse. A couple of Chopin waltzes are elegantly played, and on 82197 we have the only gramophone record of Mozart's pianoforte music the *Theme and Variations* from the *Turkish March Sonata in A*, a delightful piece of playing. An all too short list is completed by Rachmaninoff's own *Barcarolle* and Scarlatti's *Pastorale*, the latter on the fourth side of the *Hungarian Rhapsody*. The scratch in the *Pastorale* is deafening—far worse than in the *Rhapsody* on our copy, which is unfortunate in view of the delicate nature of the music.

First place :—

H.M.V. DA.369. *Dr. Gradus ad Parnassum* (Debussy).
Golliwog's Cakewalk (Debussy).
DA.370. *Prelude in C sharp minor* (Rachmaninoff).
Spinning Song (Mendelssohn).

Second place :—

DA.371 and DB.410.

Harold Samuel.

The only two records of Mr. Samuel are excellent, and we can commend them as a thoroughly sound rendering of Bach's famous *Chromatic Fantasia* and *Fugue*. The double Bourrée on the fourth side is from the *Second English Suite in A minor*, and is delightfully played. The tone is deep and pure throughout.

Irene Scharrer.

Most of her records are old and tinny. They have the real old banjo and bells effect which earned the gramophone such a bad name in connection with the pianoforte. The two newer ones (D.576, D.622) are distinctly good, and contain interesting music. The C sharp major *Prelude* and *Fugue* (No. 3 of the 48) of Bach is excellent, and the Purcell on D.622 most welcome, though the *Minuet* is on the slow side. On the reverse of the latter is an admirable performance of that old favourite, Sinding's *Fruhlingsrauschen*.

First place :—

D.576. *Prelude and Fugue in C sharp* (Bach).
Arabesque in G (Debussy).

Second place :—

D.622. *Rustle of Spring* (Sinding).
Extracts from Purcell Suites.

Adela Verne.

The *Polonaise in A flat* (Op. 53) is the only version recorded in its entirety. The other record has quite pleasant pieces on it, but both records soon wear and the tone is inclined to jangle.

Note.—We have just encountered the most attractive novelty in the way of piano records. They are the educational discs issued by the Anglo-French Co. Their repertoire consists of every piece set for the exams of the Associated Board. Though the primary pieces are not particularly interesting (Czerny and Clementi), the intermediate and advanced contain many interesting works. The tone, we may say at once, is first class. We know of no piano records more faithful to the original (except, perhaps, the Edison) and very few as good. The pieces include the first movement of the Beethoven *Sonata in E flat*, Op. 27, No. 1, the allegro from the *Sonata*, Op. 7, a couple of Bach preludes from the 48, some delightful caprices, bourrées, etc., by the same master, the Handel *Fantasia in C*, the first movement of a Mozart sonata, and many others. We have not heard all, but those we have heard have impressed us most favourably, and we strongly recommend them to all gramophonists.

GENERAL REMARKS.

As a whole we found that the most satisfactory sound-box for pianoforte records was a Jewel with a loud or medium needle. The Columbia and H.M.V. boxes should not be used with a loud needle. A very attractive combination for some records is a new Columbia box with fibre needles cut fairly short. The two composers who record best are Bach and Liszt. We know of no bad records of either composer, though the *Second Hungarian Rhapsody* is apt to be noisy. Beethoven is inclined to sound too big for the gramophone. Chopin is variable, depending chiefly upon the performer. We should like to see more Schumann, more Mozart, and more Scriabine. Above all, we need more variety. Such pieces as the *F sharp Nocturne* and the waltzes of Chopin, the *Second Hungarian Rhapsody*, and above all the *Liebesträume*, of Liszt, ought to be given a long rest in the recording room. We suggest below half-a-dozen famous works which ought to be recorded, and, we believe, would be suitable for gramophonic reproduction.

Bach: *Italian Concerto* (Harold Samuel ?).

Mozart: Any sonata or concerto (Myra Hess).

Beethoven: *Sonata in E flat* (Op. 31, No. 3) or *Sonata in A flat* (Op. 110); *Concerto No. 4 in G* (Lamond ?).

Chopin: *Sonata in B flat minor* (Op. 35) (*Funeral March*) (Hofmann ?).

Schumann: *Concerto* or *Etudes Symphoniques* (Cortot ?).

We give below a short list of some popular pianoforte pieces, with the record that we consider the best version of each.

Hungarian Rhapsody No. 2 (Liszt) (Ed. 82169, 82170) Rachmaninoff (Edison); Brunswick, 50023, Hofmann (Needle-cut).

Polonaise in A (Military) (Chopin); *Nocturne in F sharp* (Chopin) (DB.375) Paderewski.

Spring Song (Mendelssohn) (Col. D.1361) Hofmann.

Spinning Song (Mendelssohn); *Prelude in C sharp minor* (Rachmaninoff) (DA.370) Rachmaninoff.

Liebesträume No. 3 (Liszt) (D.788) Backhaus.

Valse in D flat (Chopin) (DA.371) Rachmaninoff. Both *Etudes in G flat* (Chopin) (DA.145) Cortot.

Backhaus.

The new record of Chopin's *Waltz* and *Polonaise in A flat* is well reproduced, but not much more can be said for it. There is no necessity for a new recording of either piece. Paderewski (H.M.V.) and Rachmaninoff (Edison) have both made excellent renderings of the *valse*, and with much more sympathy than Backhaus, who belabours poor Chopin till he roars again. As to the *Polonaise*, the complete version may be had by Adela Verne on Columbia, and Percy Grainger's cut version is better playing and with a much more interesting piece on the back.

Murdoch.

A totally unnecessary record has appeared in the shape of two Chopin waltzes. This has really nothing to recommend it. The reproduction is poor, the music hackneyed in the extreme, and, worst of all, the playing is emphatically bad. In the *A flat Waltz* the scales are blurred and indecisive, and in the *C sharp minor* Murdoch falls into the detestable amateurish trick of playing with an excessive rubato, whereas the piece is the one work of Chopin which is clearly labelled *Tempo Giusto*. Hofmann has made much better records of both these pieces on Columbia and Brunswick respectively.

[N.B.—We wish to thank Messrs. James Russell and Co., of Oxford, and the Gramophone Exchange, of Oxford Street, London, for their unfailing courtesy and kindness in allowing us to spend long periods in hearing records in their shops, and in supplying us with records on approval. In our most cantankerous moods we have never met with anything but the utmost friendliness from managers and assistants alike, and we wish to express our gratitude for what they have done.—O. D., K. M., J. W. H. B.]

The above article has unfortunately, owing to its length, been held up for two months.

ON MAKING A RECORD

By ERIC N. SIMONS

IT does not do to be sentimental in this world. I regret the fact, but it is so! Experience teaches, therefore let me recount here the bitter experience that has taught me. Perhaps, though I confess to pessimism on the point, it may teach others.

I do not altogether blame my own sentimentality. My gramophone dealer, you must bear in mind, is a young man of extreme subtlety. He knows me as an incorrigible gramomaniac; therefore he carefully collects together all the gramophonic novelties he can, and sets them before me on my far too frequent visits to his shop. He is a pleasant young man with blue eyes and a way of making me feel that I know as much about these things as he does, which is not true. But you will understand why, when he spreads his glittering mechanical devices before me like so many snares, I succumb.

Still, I must confess that the thought of Ermyntrude also swayed me. When he showed me a shining metal disc and a cardboard trumpet, instructed me in their use, and assured me that by their means I could record my own voice for the small sum of half a crown, I became sentimental. "Ah," I thought (when one is sentimental one always begins with "Ah"), "that will delight Ermyntrude! To have the voice of her dearly beloved husband always at hand will be a consolation to her during my daily absence. And should anything happen to me during the day, should some blind mechanical monstrosity career over my prostrate body, how sweet it will be for her to be able to put on the record of my voice and imagine that I am pent up imperishably within the internal horn."

Here, I am afraid, sentimentality waned, because I began to speculate which of my gramophones she would use, and what soundbox and needle would best suit my chesty baritone. I felt sure she would use a fibre needle and an Exhibition box, and that irked me, because I knew that the Petmecky and the Astra could alone do me justice. Still, that is neither here nor there.

I paid my half crown and went home, hugging my secret to my breast, as the novelists say. Do you think I told Ermyntrude what I had done? Not likely! I meant it to be a surprise, a blissful surprise, something that should for evermore convince her that the gramophone is a wonderful instrument. Besides, Ermyntrude says I spend too much money on gramonicknacks, so I daren't tell her everything.

The difficulty was to record my voice without her overhearing. I shut myself up in the drawing-room with my darling (I don't mean Ermyntrude, I mean

my pet cabinet machine). I think she (Ermyntrude) suspected something, because she kept coming in to ask me what time it was, and had I brought the butter in with me, and silly things like that. But I pretended merely to be tinkering with sound-boxes, until I heard her go into the garden.

Well, I put the metal disc on to the turntable, inserted the special needle, and prepared the cardboard trumpet. Next I read the instructions. They were comparatively simple. I had not to shout, but to articulate distinctly while using my normal voice. Ermyntrude says my voice isn't normal at all, but that's merely her spite. I started the motor, watched the little disc whirling round, lowered the needle on to it, and set the trumpet to my lips. Then suddenly it occurred to me that I hadn't the remotest idea what to say. I raised the needle, stopped the motor, and began to think it out.

Should I sing? That seemed to me a good idea, the only drawback being that I do not sing (Ermyntrude says "cannot"). Also there was a lack of distinction, of originality, in producing a record so usual. Most people who make gramophone records sing them, and why should I follow the common herd of Galli-Curcis, Carusoes, and so forth? No, I would be unique. But how? Should I make a speech, recite, talk, or what? I knew only two lines of poetry, the first two of "The Lay of the Last Minstrel," and to go on repeating those would be too monotonous, so I abandoned recitation.

Finally I decided I would just talk to Ermyntrude, so that when I was dead and gone she would be infallibly reminded of our companionable conversations in the evenings, of our good-fellowship, sympathy, and understanding. I re-started the machine, set the trumpet to my lips again, and began:

"My dear Ermyntrude, I don't know in what—er—circumstances you will at some future date listen to my voice—er—recorded on this disc—er—Hm!... But I want you to remember, my darling, that ah—ah—atchoo!... Dash it, I think I'm getting a—ah—atchoo! a cold... I want you to remember, my darling, that I always held you in the highest esteem—er—and though we occasionally had our little differences, for which perhaps I alone was to blame, though really, my dear, I am bound to say there were times when you might have been a little more reasonable than you were; for instance, that time when you refused to go to the Smythe dance with me because I told you you looked a fright in your new evening gown, as if it made any difference to me whether you went to the dance or not, and in any case, if a husband can't tell his own

wife, when she asks him, what he thinks of the dresses he's paid for, yes, paid for, with money earned by the sweat of his brow, it's the limit. You ought—."

Just at this point a recurrent scratch told me that the needle had reached the inner circle, so that I had finished one side of the record. I didn't quite remember all I had said, and in any case I thought it would be just as well to hear how I had got on. So I put the record on, and sat back to listen. I was still sitting back and listening when the needle hit the inner circle again, but I had heard nothing. This was incredible. My articulation, I was convinced, had been perfect, and my voice had never once been raised to a shout. I tried the record again, and crouching down, put my ear to the gramophone's orifice. Then, dimly, like the whispering of fauns in a glade, I heard sounds. A tiny, squeaking, puerile voice that bore no resemblance whatever to my own seemed to be struggling in a morass of sibilant incoherency to grasp, and pull itself out by the aid of, disconnected syllables. Something like this :

"...ssssssstrude...sss...circssssss...corded...corded...ssssssssss."

A clever cartoonist seeing me crouching on all fours in front of that machine would gladly have seized the opportunity to employ his pencil, and would no doubt have christened the finished drawing "He's missed his voice."

Evidently I had not spoken loudly enough, I thought. So I turned the disc over and began again on the other side. This time I decided to make sure that everything was going well before I turned on the tap of my eloquence, so after uttering a sentence I stopped the machine and played the sentence over before going on. Seventeen times I did this, without producing more than a feeble squeak, though each time my voice rose an octave—or so it seemed. Presently I began to see red. I refused to be defeated by a mere inconsistency of metal, a ridiculous circular stubbornness, a deaf and dumb aluminium disc. I pushed the cardboard trumpet as far up the internal horn as it would go, and my face after it. I no longer articulated with the precision of the lecture-hall ; I roared, I bellowed, I raved and shrieked, I foamed at the mouth, I—swore. Veins, swollen with effort, stood out on my forehead. My neck reddened. I perspired profusely. The very walls vibrated with the echoes of my voice. And still from that accursed, delusive, gleaming disc I could obtain nothing louder than the distant pipings of a Morlock. And then, to crown it all, Ermyntrude came in.

I ignored her. I was too far gone to care what she said, did or thought. I rose slowly, a bent and battered cardboard trumpet in my hand, a gramomaniacal glint in my eye, and fell resolve subjecting my face to considerable torque. With my right hand I seized the record ; with my left I cast down the trumpet and gripped the disc on the other side.

Then grimly, without mercy or scruple, I essayed to break it. It would not break.

Could anything have been more exasperating, more diabolical in its perversity ? Even the satisfaction of shattering it with one swift blow was denied me. I bent it, twisted it, jumped on it, threw it hither and thither, smote it with poker and tongs, and still, crumpled, battered, shapeless though it was, it defied me. Finally, breathless and dishevelled, I flung it into the fire, where it glowed with red wickedness and was found among the ashes by the maids next morning.

Ermyntrude has hardly yet recovered from her fright, and I believe that henceforward she will always take gramomania more seriously as a distinct form of madness. But she has extracted from me a promise that though I break records in the future, I will never again make one.

So she will not after all have my voice to console her when I am dead and gone. Perhaps it is as well.

ERIC N. SIMONS.

The Oldest Record

A correspondent in one of our contemporaries has been enquiring whether Dan Leno's record of *The Huntsman* and *Going to the Races* is the oldest record actually in use to-day. Presumably some of the records in the H.M.V. Historical Catalogue would beat it easily ; but incidentally we have been told by one of our readers that this record used to be a particular favourite of his, and that on encountering it again the other day in a friend's house he formed the opinion that it had been re-recorded by some other voice not unlike Dan Leno's. Is this possible ? Of course it is possible. But is it likely ? Queer stories of the recording room might be told, no doubt, particularly in connection with band and dance records ; and we have hopes of persuading someone in the know to raise the veil to the point of indiscretion one of these days.

Ghost Voices

It would be amusing to collect a list of records on which unintended asides have been immortalised. There was the voice which said "He's on the wrong side" on the first *Siegfried* record, mentioned by the Editor in Vol. I., p. 57 ; and the "Spook voice," which "Fose" heard on Galli-Curci's *Ah ! fors' è lui* (Vol. I., p. 212) ; and now a correspondent writes of a strange voice at the very end of George Robey's *I think I shall sleep well to-night* (H.M.V. C.549). There is one also at the end of one of Beerbohm Tree's recitations ; and it is quite possible that with the modern improvements in sound-boxes many of these latent blemishes in old records are being brought to the surface. Perhaps some of our readers can add to this list by playing the game of Hunt the Slip on the unsuspecting veterans of their albums.

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SOME FUNNY RECORDS

By THE EDITOR

I WILL wager that most of my readers have had as much difficulty as I have in finding records on which they can rely for a good laugh. Moreover, the painful nature of the preliminary research that is required is enough to daunt the bravest ear. I have been tempted once or twice to proclaim my own taste in this direction, but, to tell the truth, I was a little discouraged by several letters of protest I received from readers who had been induced to buy an H.M.V. record of *My Sweetie went Away* (parodied) and *Banana Blues*, solely on account of my strong recommendation of it. I felt that the reverse of the dictum, "Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone," would be truer of the gramophone's effect. In fact, I felt rather like a deserted jackass braying in a forty-acre field. However, as a very large number of people laugh at the things I write for the purpose of being laughed at, I cannot believe that my taste in gramophonic humour is entirely peculiar. For me the classic comic records on the gramophone are those of Harry Tate published by the Columbia Company—particularly *Motoring* and *Selling a Car* (320 and 870). *Fortifying the Home* (504) I like less, chiefly, I think, because its jokes about the German invasion sound a little dated nowadays.

I wish that we could have some more Harry Tate records. I should imagine that *Broadcasting* might be particularly good on the gramophone. Of course, I have often seen Harry Tate in *Motoring*, and nearly laughed myself out of my stall every time, but I don't think that my appreciation of it as a record is helped by that. I really cannot imagine the existence of a person who would not think them funny every time he put them on. Now, in days gone by I have laughed consumedly at poor George Formby, but none of his records that I have heard at all succeed in perpetuating his humour. Partly

this is because he is not as gloriously distinct as Harry Tate, and distinctness on comic records counts for a very great deal. On the whole, I should say that the George Robey records do not do justice to the "prime minister of mirth." The H.M.V. records of him are almost all poor, and with one or two exceptions the Columbia ones are not much better. In justice to both recording companies this is due not so much to them as to Robey's choice of songs or sketches. What I want from him on the gramophone is that inimitable impersonation of the dresser called upon to take the place of an absent turn, Charles II., the Prehistoric Man, and many others which delighted us in days gone by, before these confounded revues put a greater burden on his shoulders than he could bear. Definitely the best record of his that I have found is Columbia 3111, on one side of which, in his best Dickensian manner, he gives us a bit of cockney genre in *See what I mean, why of course*, and on the other side, in a *Prison Soliloquy*, a delicious parody of a poem by Ella Wheeler Wilcox, and as an encore an equally delicious parody of a nautical ballad.

Alfred Lester is a comedian who has been steadily incapable of amusing me either on the gramophone or in the flesh for a number of years, but only last month H.M.V. brought out a record (H.M.V. C.1170), on one side of which is a song called *Gardening* which really is funny; the reverse, *Daisies and Dandelions*, is one of those dismal attempts at the comic rustic about which the less said the better. However, in spite of the futile reverse, *Gardening* pays for both. *The Meanderings of Monty* are probably familiar to most of our readers, but in case they are not I should like to take this opportunity of saying what an absolutely first-class gramophone artist Mr. Milton Hayes is. I should like to recommend particularly Col. 3233

and 3475, and as less good the second record 3313. All the Co-Optimist records published by H.M.V. fill me with gloom ; they are so confoundedly genteel. Perhaps my delight in Pelissier and my long connection with the Follies has prejudiced me against the Co-Optimists, and to readers who have heard them and enjoy them I can only say that the records are, as specimens of recording, excellent.

Two really funny records are Columbia 1328 and 2567. In some ways I should be tempted to put these next to the Harry Tate records. Mr. Vivian Foster might seem rash to be caricaturing a clergyman at this time of day ; but both in the *Parson Addresses his Flock* and the *Parson at a Sewing-Party*, he makes one laugh so much that one hears something new to laugh at every time one puts on a record. There can be few gramophonists who do not possess at least one Harry Lauder record, and there is no need for me to waste space in praising Harry Lauder for his consummate handling of the record as a medium for his genius. Many readers, however, may not have made the acquaintance of another Scottish comedian, and I can strongly recommend Col. 961, on which Will Fyffe sings on one side *I am ninety-four to-day* and on the other *I belong to Glasgow*, both first-class. Last month Columbia gave us the first records of Frank Tinney. This is American humour at its best, and, personally, I find it extraordinarily diverting. At the same time, I should suggest to Mr. Frank Tinney that the jokes about Sir Alfred Butt and Miss Clarice Mayne are rather too much inclined to be family jokes to be successful on the gramophone, and I hope in his next records he will not hamper what would be universal appreciation by indulging in these family jokes. He must remember that Sir Alfred Butt means nothing except to a few people in London. Violet Loraine—I had almost said the late lamented Violet Loraine—was always good on the gramophone, and quite in the first half-dozen comic records I must put *The Gypsy Warned Me* (H.M.V. 487).

Another good H.M.V. record of about the same period is Stanley Lupino singing *On the Staff* (H.M.V. 143) ; this has Raymond Hitchcock on the other side singing *I'm all dressed up and no place*

to go. Another Stanley Lupino record is *The Bad Man of Mexico* (H.M.V. B.1789) ; *Oh, Italy* on the other side is not so good and very indistinct. The Norah Blaney and Gwen Farrar records of H.M.V. seem to me good, but I find the Ernest Hastings records both by Columbia and H.M.V. dreary. At the same time, I must confess to a constitutional loathing for the gentleman who entertains us with his hands on the keys of the piano and his eyes on the audience. The best of the *Why did I kiss that girl* records is certainly Parlophone E.5222, sung by Harry Fay and Bertha Wilmot ; this has *Riley's Cowshed* on the other side, also very good. The best of the *It ain't gonna rain no mo'* records is the Brunswick version. Jack Pleasants on the Zonophone is good enough, but too indistinct to be a real success. A good pair of records by the Parlophone Company are E.225-226, *Veterans of Variety*, in which a quartet sings a series of bygone music-hall favourites. I recommend these records to the sentimental humorist. Leslie Henson, great comedian though he be in the flesh, is a complete failure on the gramophone, and the H.M.V. records of him and a young lady, whose name for the moment I cannot remember, should be avoided. So, too, should Bransby Williams and his records. These last condemnations sound dogmatic, but I am assuming that any reader who is rashly going to allow himself to be guided by my taste in humour will take the trouble to reassure himself beforehand that he is likely to agree with me before he allows himself to be the victim of my prejudices. It is wearisome work searching for laughs in gramophone catalogues, and there must be a lot of what our contemporaries call "gems" among the Winners and Regals, not to mention the Imperials and Beltonas. Probably the best way to find them will be to enlist our readers' help, and to make a competition of it so as to obtain a selected half-dozen by popular vote. But this must wait till next year, and in the meantime I ask you to make notes of the good comic records that you hear, so that if I have done injustice to any comedian justice may be done to him by you.

COMPTON MACKENZIE.

The Chain of Composers

The runner-up in our Symphony Competition, Mr. W. A. Chislett, has sent us the programme of a lecture-recital given by him on the 20th of last month before the Halifax Literary and Philosophical Society, with the above title. It is very interesting as illustrating the range of the gramophone as a "musical factor," and includes Purcell (the *Golden Sonata*), Bach (*Prelude and Fugue in B flat*), Haydn (*Quartet in E flat*, Op. 64, No. 2), Mozart (the *G minor Symphony* and *Il mio tesoro*), Beethoven

(*Seventh Symphony*), Schumann (*Der Nussbaum*), Chopin, Wagner, Brahms, Moussorgsky (*Une nuit sur le mont chauve*), Borodine (*March from Prince Igor*), and César Franck (the *Sonata in A* and *Le chasseur maudit*). Of course, only single movements were given, but with appropriate comments such a programme can convey a sense of the continuity of tradition to any audience, whether literary or philosophical or both or neither. We trust that Mr. Chislett roped in some new members for the National Gramophonic Society !

The Riddle of Haydn's Tombstone

(From a Correspondent)

JOSEF HAYDN, the great composer, lies buried in the cemetery facing the Hundsturmerlinie, Vienna, and his grave is covered by a tombstone bearing a musical inscription which has long been a mystery that has led to much dispute and a great deal of controversy. An apparent solution of the riddle has now been found by Mr. Georg Huebscher, of Basle (Switzerland), who has translated the notes to convey the wish "Lasse mich Gnade finden, wenn für mich der Tag kommt." (Let me find Mercy, when the Day comes for me.) He comes to this interpretation by arranging each of the notes on the tombstone according to its distance from the line passing through it upon the basis of our modern five-line system with violin key, and instead of marking the notes with the customary modern scale of c to h he uses the old tonic sol-fa system, which is believed to have been introduced by Guido von Arezzo, who used the syllables (derived from the Latin) "ut, re, mi, fa, sol, la si," the raising of a note by one half-tone being characterised by the use of the Greek word "Diesis." The notes on the tombstone were then read off as follows (according to their duration, semibrevis, brevis, and minima) :



which, Mr. Huebscher says, is to be translated by the words, "Lass mich Gnade finden (mache Gnade mir) wenn mir der Tag kommt," or literally rendered, "Make Mercy to me when for me the day comes" (i.e., the day of resurrection). This transcription into German (using, it may be remarked, the French word "remission" for Gnade or Mercy, the Latin "dies" for Tag or day, and the Italian "fa" for Mache or make) certainly assumes a considerable amount of "freedom" in linguistic interpretation or somewhat of a confusion of tongues. This, however, is not uncommon in musical matters. If it be borne in mind that the old musical "Can(on) aenigm(aticus)" was often used as a kind of artistic riddle or joke, then the assumption is fairly plausible that when Neukomm, Haydn's last pupil, buried his beloved master he composed the above fugue as a fitting mystic compliment to the wording on the tombstone: "Non Omnis Moriar" (I shall not wholly die).

COMPETITIONS

A. Illness has unfortunately deferred the article on Band Records which a contributor had promised to undertake; but, by way of marking time and of collecting useful information for him (without, of course, prejudicing his opinions!), we offer a prize of Two Pounds' Worth of Records, to be chosen by the winner, for the list of the Twelve Best Military Band records as decided by popular vote. If any reader is in doubt as to the connotation of a Military Band, he is referred to the beginning of Mr. Rutherford's article on p. 231 of the April number.

B. We offer a prize of Fifteen Shillings' Worth of Records, to be chosen by the winner, for the best Epigramophone in not more than eight lines. (See Hilaire Belloc's Epigramophones in Vol. I., Nos. 4, 5, 6 and 7.)

C. We offer a set of *Ruddigore* records, complete in album (value £2 19s. 6d.), for the best stanza (twenty lines) in the metre of *The Humane Mikado* about Gramomaniacs, describing the punishment which fits the crime. Gilbert's original—we almost apologise for quoting—runs as follows:—

The advertising quack who wears
With tales of countless cures,
His teeth, I've enacted,
Shall all be extracted
By terrified amateurs :

The music-hall singer attends a series
Of masses and fugues and "ops."
By Bach, interwoven
With Spohr and Beethoven,
At classical Monday Pops.

The same metre is repeated for the second half of the stanza.

The following rules must be observed:—

1. Write only on one side of the paper.
2. Post your entry, with the coupon on p. xxxiv, in an envelope marked "Competitions," so as to reach THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, London, W. 1, not later than the first post on January 1st. A competitor may enter for all the competitions with the one coupon, but must write on separate sheets of paper for each.
3. The Editor's decision is final, and he reserves the right to publish any of the lists or verses in THE GRAMOPHONE.

[The result of the Concerto Competition will be announced in the January Number.]

SURFACE VIBRATION

Production, Conduction, Enhancement

By Captain H. T. BARNETT, M.I.E.E.

SURFACE noise is to me the most objectionable of all the faults of the ordinary gramophone, because it makes more than any other thing for the destruction of the illusion of "the instrument in the room"—that cherished goal toward which all my work of the last three years has been directed. In the space of a short article I will try to render clear to the non-technical the causes that lead to engagement of the needle with the record surface so that vibrations other than musical ones are set up; how they are transmitted to the tone conduit, and how subsequently enhanced by the acoustic system of the gramophone. I will also endeavour to show the course in design and selection that should be followed in order that this intolerable nuisance may be minimised.

PRODUCTION.

On a perfect gramophone the causes governing this are: (a) Condition of record surface, (b) the form and character of the needle-point, (c) needle angle, (d) weight on the needle. On most gramophones there is also one other cause (e) faulty needle-track alignment.

SMOOTHNESS OF RECORD SURFACE.—New Process Columbia records, when new, or even when old, if they have been properly treated, really leave nothing to be desired under this heading; they are rarely even "spotty," and Regal and Parlophone records (the latter sometimes a little spotty) follow them so closely as to be almost indistinguishable from them. With all three of these makes the surface noise is so small under perfect conditions of playing that if it were smaller it would be difficult to tell, even when listening intently, when the needle begins to take the track. But to careless people there is a slight disadvantage with these records, for if the surface becomes abraded, even ever so slightly, the composition is so hard that the abrasion will never "burnish out," and consequently no amount of subsequent playing will put the record right again. Aco, Actuelle, Beltona, Coliseum, Homochord, Ludgate, V.F., and a few other records may be bracketed together for consideration. When new there is a slight "silky" (if I may call it so) noise from the surface with an almost entire absence of crepitation due to "spottiness." After playing under perfect conditions for fifty times or thereabouts these records all become so burnished that they are hardly distinguishable from a record of the group first mentioned, and they also have this advantage, that small spots or slight scratches tend gradually to

burnish out and disappear; but when used with fibre needles they wear out quicker than the harder wax, especially under conditions of bad needle-track alignment. The latest improvement in the surface of Winner records constitutes another class, the surface glaze is so good that on my Peridulce they emit almost too little noise when new, and at the same time abrasions and slight spottiness tend to burnish away. H.M.V. records show more surface noise than most, but under perfect conditions they improve a little with playing in that respect, general crepitation from small spots, and "rifle fire" due to large spots, also becoming less. Imperial records are recently improved and for all music of reasonably large tone are in every way passable. Zonophone records are the noisiest I know and with the best steel needles I do not find them improve, but with fibre needles they wear less than one might expect them to do.

FORM AND CHARACTER OF NEEDLE POINT.—So far as I can see (and, of course, it is a matter of general observation and not of exact measurement) the smaller the surface of the needle in contact with the groove and *the lower down in the groove* that contact surface is, the fewer and the less insistent are the vibrations caused. The more elastic and capable of flexure in an up and down direction the *point* of the needle, the less are the harmful vibrations generated. For examples: among "once play" needles I still find nothing better than the "H.M.V. loud" with its beautifully curved point that does not bear on too large a surface of the straight-sided track groove; among fine needles I will instance the Sympathetic (the curved-sided point only) and the Euphonic needles, both of which owe their quietness to three causes: engagement of the needle with the *bottom* of the track only (under perfect playing conditions), the curvature of the sides of the point, and the vertical flexibility of the point.

NEEDLE ANGLE.—The farther removed from the vertical the angle of the needle is *in the case of machines having correct needle-track alignment* the less does the weight upon the needle tend to dig the point of it into the record material and the greater is the vertical elasticity of the point when passing over an irregularity. In practice one finds that the needle angle *should never be more than 50° from the horizontal*. Owing to the fact that the record makers themselves all use 60° needle angle and record for this, one is unfortunately *prevented from using less than 45° angle*.

WEIGHT ON NEEDLE.—The less the weight on the needle, within limits, the smaller the surface noise. When using ordinary needles the weight should not exceed four or five ounces. I use this weighting of the needle myself with all needles, but if I were *sure* a machine would *never* be used with any but fine steel needles I should reduce the weight to two ounces only because the little sharp points of these needles take so perfect a seating in the track that even with this small weight upon them there is not the least need to fear they will skip or jump in the track in the way that coarse needles *often* do even when more heavily weighted.

FAULTY NEEDLE-TRACK ALIGNMENT.—On most gramophones this is the worst maker of surface vibration. The needle axis is not on a vertical plane in line with that part of the groove where the point touches. In other words, the needle is not dipping straight into the groove but is jammed into it sideways so that its point is gouging out the bottom of the groove on one side and its side is smashing down the top of the groove on the other. It is the easiest thing in the world to see if your needle is true to the track. If your machine is a goose-neck it is almost sure to be wrong, and the "trombone" goose-neck with the sound-box carried to the left of and perhaps parallel with the tone-arm axis is the worst offender. There are two ways by which these machines may be improved; one is to interpose a couple of adaptors between the sound-box and its socket and the other is to take a pair of gas pliers and bend out the trombone portion of the tone-arm so that the parallel sides of the U become separated by a greater distance at the top than at the bottom. Some machines need both these curative measures to put them right. Those who wish for further information on this subject should read the masterly and most painstaking articles by Mr. P. Wilson in the September and October (1924) numbers of **THE GRAMOPHONE**. Too much care cannot possibly be devoted to the subject because bound up with it most intimately is the question of all others the most important to the ardent gramophonist—namely, that of the wear on his records.

CONDUCTION.

Not by any means less in importance than the generation of vibratory movements is the transmission of them to that part of the acoustic system where they are first turned into noise. This conversion occurs in two ways, one from reciprocatory movements of the diaphragm and the other by metallic conduction.

DIAPHRAGM MOVEMENT.—Surface roughness on the *sides* of the record grooves may cause reciprocatory movement of the diaphragm in the *true* way that these movements are produced by the musical sinuosities, but such movements are of slight importance; they cannot be cut out, and, indeed, there is no need nowadays to trouble about them.

Using, as I do, a diaphragm exceedingly mobile in the direction of correct movement, and most rigid and resistant over its face to ripple actions of any sort I find that sound from this cause is negligible in quantity. With mica diaphragms, however, subject as they are to be thrown into all sorts of ripple motion in every direction, the case is very different, and even to those who like the pungent interference tone derived from a piece of tortured, striated material such as mica under musical vibration there offers a very good reason for substituting for the mica some diaphragm more theoretically correct.

METALLIC TRANSMISSION comes into play chiefly from hill and dale roughnesses of the track, and is a larger factor than one might expect it to be. Take the diaphragm out of a sound-box having steel tension spring and a stylus bar pivoted on pins or the like parallel with the stylus bar and use it on a rough record with a loud needle; you will be surprised at the amount of noise arising from vertical movement. Now substitute a box as similar as possible (and still with no diaphragm) except that the pivots are *at right-angles to the stylus bar*, and you will note a marked reduction in noise. If now you substitute for the steel tension spring a rubber one you will note a further reduction.

ENHANCEMENT.

Under precisely similar playing conditions and with the same record and the same sound-box some gramophones will show much more surface noise than others. Anything in the machine capable of causing interference effect in the musical tone will also amplify surface noise quite inordinately. A goose-neck, a rough interior to the tone-arm or tone-arm continuation, abrupt changes in the shape of the tone conduit, obstructing corners, a megaphone (straight-sided) horn, a horn made of hard material, will all play their part in amplifying surface noise.

In conclusion, for the benefit of those who have machines with no cover, I may perhaps refer to the small amount of surface noise from the records and rotary record table. This is no great factor, but it may be sensibly reduced by placing a rubber "non-skid" pad on the table; this serves to damp vibration of the record itself better than any other substance will do, and it forms a more effective insulator than most things for separating the record from the table.

I have said nothing in this article about means for absorbing surface vibration, such, for example, as fibre needles, soft material needle adaptors, secondary diaphragms, and so on, because all those things tend also to absorb musical tone, and they also spoil cleanliness of definition. I think it much better to avoid the production and development of surface noise than to produce it first and then to absorb some part of it afterwards and some of the most valuable qualities of one's music with it. H. T. BARNETT.

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SOME HUMOURS OF OUR HOBBY

By "INDICATOR"

To ease, if not avoid, the disputatious dangers, and in some cases the consequent domestic rumpus, that may possibly ensue from a general and family reading of this article, the humour may act as a sort of sugar-coating ; also, it may help to preserve some from forgetting that though to us our hobby is a serious matter, yet we must not take ourselves too seriously.

I must also apologise in advance, with shame, for a superficially apparent ungallantry to the ladies. However, I'm really not going to be very rude to anybody.

Now for the plunge. A lamentable tendency has been going on for some time to subordinate realist results to secondary considerations and crippling limitations ; I refer to the virtual exclusion, almost extermination, of the external horn instrument. Period models, of periods that have been and periods yet to be, round models like fern pots, models with beautiful curves varying high and low like the waist-line of feminine fashions, with legs knock-kneed and bandy, curly and attenuated, camouflaged models to look like anything in the boudoir, bedroom, or drawing-room—anything but a gramophone.

And who is this to please ? Who is mainly to blame ? Now Adam, confess. Is it not Eve ? "Oh, but the serpents (manufacturers) tempted me !" Yes, my dear, but they only bring out these rosy apples because they know you—you—you want them, and because wanting them, poor Adam, strong Adam, will have to have them. Now it's no use, Adam, you expostulating "Oh no, not at all, not at all !" and straining to argue equal results and all that. If you put up any fight at all it went something like this : "Hang it all, it's my hobby ; I ought to have that horn model. It's the music, the result, that matters. Confound the furniture. I'm not a lodger, I ought to have my own way. She wants me at home, not out at the club, etc. ; well, the gram. will keep me in ; besides, it's for her to hear as well. Home, sweet home." (He then drops into soliloquy.) "But it won't be sweet if she hates the sight of the blessed horn, will it ? After all, she's got to look at it during the day. Perhaps I'm interfering too much in the home. Wifey, Queen of the Home, etc. I do as I like (perhaps) outside. Oh well, have the nice pretty piece of furniture ; it is a gramophone. The horn models are a bit cheap, as she says ; the Jo-hones's next door, with their posh 150-guineas Louis XV Niaphone, would turn up their noses. 'A bit

old-fashioned, aren't they, old chap ?' I can hear them say." So, the capitulation ! So, the "Console" model comes in to console the ruffled wifey. So, instead of £8, nearer £80 may be spent, and you do not get what the £8 horn model could undoubtedly give you—the best reproduction of music.

Next, the collection of records. Oh, the surreptitious dodges to get every fresh purchase in unnoticed ! When discovered : "What ! More records ! And there's Archibald's knickers, Gladys's gloves, new curtains in the drawing-room wanted." It's a new hat for sure will only balance that six-sided symphony. What blackmail ! And as the collection accumulates, first the odd things come out of the sideboard to make room for records, finally they overflow in albums and piles on to piano-top, tables, etc. Lucky if there's the semblance of system, still worse if otherwise. That's our "housing problem." Can poor Adam help it ? Have pity, Eve ! Life is short, art is long. We may not be here on earth much longer (sob stuff). One Adam said to Eve : "My dear, when I'm gone there's only one thing I ask ; bring the monthly lists regularly and lay them on my grave." Eve answered : "Grave ! It's the asylum first for you. I'll bring you round pieces of cardboard, and a big horn gramophone, if they don't supply it in the special ward there for gramophone maniacs."

Most of us believe our gram. has caused our musical education upwards, from the "tripe" we first played to *L'après-midi d'un faune*, etc. Yes, but there's a fly in the ointment. Sitting down Sunday to a symphony, say. It hasn't proceeded far when : "Oh ! Is that that long thing you've started ? Do let us have something lively ; you know, something light !" So you switch off the heavy and do your best to cheerfully(?) oblige. You think you'll try later when things are quiet. After kissing everybody good-night you put on Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony* ; the first few sides slide along in the hush, then the choral part bursts out ; door opens gently, Eve in nighty looks in. "Adam, aren't you afraid the neighbours will think we're quarrelling ? Then, the children, dear ! Little Herbert sleeps so lightly." Oh-h-h-h, you stifle a groan and put on a Lener quartet, turn it up, and go to bed. Yes, we do have something to put up with, don't we ? (Chorus : "Yes, WE do.") Personally I always, when reproved, point out the other fellow who's so much worse than me. I know one chap who is very handy to me in this way. He has a huge collection of records

all over the place, innumerable sound-boxes, several gramophones, more still of Blue Amberols and phonograph instruments, besides a veritable exhibition of first-class wireless. Look at him! A good husband, but an irrepressible, tireless tackler of

reproduction problems. (At the end of the world he will be first on his feet to tell Gabriel that the last trump sounded not a bit so good as it would on a Blue Amberol.) But there! We're all "nuisances" to someone.

"INDICATOR."



ON PROGRAMMES

(Continued)

By Dr. FRANCIS MEAD

ON looking back at the season of 1924 one is struck with the advance one is able to make in the direction of concert music, an advance one feels largely due to the valued influence of THE GRAMOPHONE magazine. For a comparison of items the July number of the magazine has the 1923 programmes.

No. 1.—Brandenburg Concerto.—(1) *Overture, Fingal's Cave*. (2) *Sonata, D major* (Handel). (3) *Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer* (64553) (Culp), *Sapphische Ode, In dem Kirchofe* (Brunswick 15048B.) (Sigrid Onegin), *Der Schmied* (45060A.) (Christine Miller) (four Brahms' songs). (4) *Fugue in C minor* (Bach), *Brandenburg Concerto*. (5) *Concerto for two violins in D minor* (Bach) (Kreisler and Zimbalist). (6) *Lascia ch'io pianga* (85112), *Das Erkennen* (88580), *Fruhlingszeit, Spinnerliedchen* (Schumann-Heink). (7) *Invitation to the dance* (Odeon, 5020A.).

No. 2.—English Contemporary.—(1) *Overture, The Pierrot of the Minute*. (2) *Quartette in C minor* (Warner), *Phantasy in D* (Warner). (3) *Songs of the pavement*. (4) *Symphony, C sharp minor* (McEwen). (5) *Songs of old London*. (6) *Sonata in A minor* (Ireland). (7) *Four cautionary tales and a moral* (Liza Lehmann). (8) *Keltic suite* (Foulds). (Programme a little too long, 2 hours 15 minutes.)

No. 3.—French.—*Prelude, Le Deluge, Le rouet d'Omphale* (Am. Col. A.6087), *The Golliwogs' Cakewalk* (Debussy). (2) *Air du tambour major* (88034), *Le Soupir* (81073) (Plançon). (3) *Sonata in A minor* (Franck). (4) *Rossignols amoureux* (74249), *Depuis le jour* (74252), *Berceuse* (74869) (Gluck). (5) *Le chasseur maudit, L'Apprenti sorcier*. (6) *Sonnet matinale, Il neige* (64294), *Bergère légère, L'adieu matin* (64223), *Chanson Lorraine* (64232) (Edmond Clement). (7) *Second Concerto in G minor* (Saint-Saëns). (8) *Le cœur de m'amie* (45063A.), *Dimanche à l'aube* (45063B.), *La Source, Ballet* (35094A.). (A little long, 2 hours 5 minutes.)

No. 4.—The L.S.Q. and the Greshams.—(1) *Quartette Op. 64* (Hadyn). (2) *Let us all go Maying, Down in a flowery vale*. (3) *Quintette in G minor* (Mozart). (4) *Tell me babbling echo, Go rose*. (5)

Quartette in G major (Beethoven). (6) *Cupid look about thee, The song of the pedlar*. (7) *Quartette Op. 12* (Mendelssohn).

No. 5.—Tchaikovsky.—(1) *Capriccio Italien*. (2) *Aria, Eugen Onegin* (31463) (Janpolski). (3) *Theme and variations from Trio in A minor*. (4) *Ye who have yearned alone* (17060B.) (Baker). (5) *Andante Cantabile, Melodie Op. 42* (Elman), *Chant d'Automne* (Zimbalist). (6) *A moment of terror* (61133) (Michailowa), *Duet, Pique dame* (61136) (Michailowa and Tugarinoff). (7) *Symphony No. 6 in B minor* (Pathétique).

No. 6.—Variations Symphoniques.—(1) *Overture, Bartered Bride*. (2) *Trio in E major "Köchel"* (Mozart). (3) *Fra poco a mi ricovero* (88215), *Tu chie a Dio* (88249), *Snowy breasted pearl* (74166) (MacCormack). (4) *Variations Symphoniques*. (5) *Come per me sereno, Ah non credea, Caro nome* (74499), *Il dolce suono* (Galli-Curci). (6) *Sonata in A, Op. 8* (Mozart).

No. 9.—Beethoven.—(1) *Symphony No. 7* (English Columbia). (2) *Sonata, Moonlight*. (3) *Violin Concerto Op. 61*.

No. 8.—Ballads and folk songs.

No. 9.—"Richard Strauss."—(1) *Don Juan*. (2) *Valse triste* (Powell). (3) *Tod und Verklärung*. (4) *Orientele No. 9* (Zimbalist). (5) *Dance of the Seven Veils* (6240A.B.). (6) *Caprice Viennois* (Kreisler). (7) *Till Eulenspiegel*. (8) *Spanish dance*. (VIII.) (Kubelik). (9) *Danzas fantasticas* (Turina).

No. 10.—"From the New World."—(1) *Symphony No. 5* (Dvořák) (Eng. Col.). (2) *Sonata in D minor* (Brahms). (3) *Erlkonig Feldensamkeit* (Gerhardt). (4) *Midsummer Night's Dream, Overture* (Parlophone, E10015-6.), *Scherzo* (Ibid.), *Intermezzo* (35527B.), *Nocturne* (35527A.), *Wedding March* (55048B.).

No. 11.—A second concert of folk songs and ballads by request.

No. 12.—Final programme.—(1) *Symphony No. 5* (Beethoven) (Berlin Phil.). (2) *Sonata Appassionata* (Beethoven). (3) *Quartette in E flat* (Haydn). (4) *Song cycle, In a Persian Garden* (Liza Lehmann).

F. H. MEAD, M.D.

National Gramophonic Society Notes

[All communications should be addressed to the Secretary, N.G.S., 58, Frith Street, London, W.1.]

The speed at which the records should be played is 80.

THE basement at 58, Frith Street, was a yellow chaos on the last Saturday in October, when the three thousand records of the N.G.S. were unpacked and the process of sorting and repacking them in sets for members began. It was a formidable task for the staff, but the last of the parcels were despatched within a week, and, considering the frailties of records in this postal world, very few breakages or cracks have been reported. Next time we shall probably make an even better job of the distribution.

* * *

The number of original members who voluntarily forwarded an extra five or ten shillings to cover the expenses of packing and postage is remarkable and most gratifying, and we are proud to acknowledge the generous response to our naive appeal in the September number. It shows the spirit which is bound to make a success of the Society. Banker's order forms (which are available for any member who thinks he can bring any friends into the Society) provide for half-yearly payments of £3 5s.—the pounds for twelve records, and the shillings for packing and postage. Judging by the expense of distributing the first batch this charge is not excessive; and if any member who has not paid it, and who has received the records safely, cares to add this ten shillings a year after the example of the majority, it is not too late!

* * *

Half of the Schönberg Sextet, *Verklärte Nacht*, and half the Schubert *Piano Trio in E flat*, have been recorded and are pronounced a success. But it has been very hard for Mr. Spencer Dyke to fit dates with the recording company for the completion of either, and at the moment of going to press it seems more than doubtful when the next batch of records will be ready for distribution. January 1st was the date originally intended, but to adhere to this promise would be over-sanguine.

* * *

Now with regard to the reception of the Beethoven and Debussy records by members—this has been truly remarkable—so remarkable that we should like to quote all the letters that have come in to the office. Either the malcontents have thought it kinder not to express grievances or there are none. There is a chorus of praise and appreciation without one discordant note. A peculiarly personal comment comes from a convent in Scotland: "Directly

I had unpacked them Mother Sub-Priress tackled the Debussy and we had it right through. Oh, how it brought old memories back and how fascinating it is! I've never *heard* it before, as I've always *played* in it. It's a wonderfully clever and neat performance—excellent ensemble; but somehow I miss N—'s poetic passion and C—'s "fuoco d'inferno," as Boito called it at the Piatti memorial concert at Bergamo years ago, and M—'s great beautiful tone. We played it at all the German concerts, and they had never heard it in Berlin. Then yesterday we had the Beethoven, and that we have often played, and I led it at the R.C.M. at a students' concert." How many of our readers will recognise the writer as one whom Stanford called the "best second fiddle in London"?

* * *

In case this page meets the eye of any reader who is not already a member, the following quotations from other letters may convince more powerfully than any words of ours. For instance: "I wish to congratulate you very heartily on them. The surface is wonderful, the music divine—especially Debussy's—and the restraint of careful Mr. Spencer Dyke and his comrades becomes more charming every time I play the records. . . . I live with impatience for January" (David Daltry, Stevenage). "The Society has justified itself by its first issue—almost beyond our hopes; and I for one feel a real, though vicarious, pride in its achievement" (J. L. Hamshere, Liverpool). "I don't know who did the recording but the records strike me as being the best reproduction of string tone yet achieved" (D. G. Clarke, New Malden). "They are perfectly lovely. I am revelling in them" (Miss Morris, Herne Bay). "They are superb, and I don't really know whether to like them most for the musicianly playing as shown in the perfect balance between the different parts or for the recording and general get-up, which is quite distinctive" (Lionel Gilman, Purley). "Without any exception they are (1) the finest surfaces, (2) the finest playing, (3) the finest music, (4) the finest recording, (5) the best labelling, that, so far, it has been my privilege to reproduce in my home" (E. S. Gunton, Bristol). "We are *most delighted* with them. The Debussy strikes me as, in balance of tone and clearness of detail perhaps the best string quartet recording I have heard" (A. C. Rankin, Walmley).

CORRESPONDENCE

De Gustibus Non Est Disputandum.

[All letters and manuscripts should be written on one side only of the paper and should be addressed to the Editor, The Gramophone, 58, Frith Street, London, W.1. The writer's full name and address must be given. A stamped envelope must be enclosed if an answer or the return of a manuscript is desired. The Editor wishes to emphasise the obvious fact that the publication of letters does not imply his agreement with the views expressed by correspondents.]

MISCELLANEOUS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Your publication of the words of *Largo al Factotum* in a recent issue has relieved the minds of many who discovered a local allusion in the reiterated sounds of "Battersea Park," which occur in most records of this great aria. But I am still anxious to know why the chorus in the *Prince Igor* ballet music towards the end of the second side suddenly relapse from Russian into English and sing "Oh, I went and kissed his father!" Whose father, and why did they go and kiss him? Perhaps Mr. Little can clear this up. Congratulations to the enterprising Parlophone Company in giving the words of German arias with the records. Also many thanks to them for the beautiful Brahms' *Andante* by the Eweler Quartet, which is wrongly labelled "Op. 97" instead of "Op. 67." Why not complete the quartet on two or three subsequent records?

Has anyone observed the ingenuity of the new H.M.V. tone-arm oscillating eccentric "runout," a device calculated to bring joy to the hearts of Automatic-Stop enthusiasts? And is Mr. Herman Klein right in describing Sigrid Onégin (p. 195) as a "high mezzo-soprano"? Because, if he is, Mr. Compton Mackenzie and Chappells must, of necessity, be wrong in calling her a contralto.

I would advise lovers of Negro Spirituals to hear Vocalion R.6131, 6132, 6133, all by Roland Hayes, before buying any by Edna Thomas, good as that lady is. To hear Hayes sing Coleridge-Taylor and Quilter is delightful. Perhaps the Aeolian Company will get him to do so on records one day. I would also recommend those who like contrasts in singing to hear Tchaikovsky's *Forest Song*, as sung by Nadejin on Velvet Face and by Peter Dawson on H.M.V. C.1169.

Yours faithfully,

J. C. W. CHAPMAN.

CONFICTING REVIEWS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I hope you will see your way to publish this letter together with your reply, because I feel sure the subject is of interest to many of your readers. Some of us believed that with the arrival of THE GRAMOPHONE we should get reliable advice as to the selection of records. We are beginning to wonder whether we were leaning on a broken reed. Perhaps it is unreasonable to expect complete agreement between the "Analytical Notes and First Reviews" and the Quarterly Reviews written by the Editor; but surely such glaring differences of opinion as occur in connection with—e.g., Cortot's *Carnaval* records (pages 135 and 190), or Anseaux's *O Paradis* (pages 61 and 73) might be avoided.

Anyway, I think we have a right to expect that the Editor should not in one number advise us to buy a record, and in another number tell us to leave it alone. For example, in a recent article on Caruso we are told (page 46), "All Caruso's *Faust* records strike me as comparative failures," and we are recommended not to buy them; and on page 122 the four songs by Caruso, with accompaniment by Elman, are dismissed with a contemptuous remark. And yet in a list of forty-six records selected for us by the Editor, from the whole H.M.V. Celebrity Catalogue (page 163), there appear a double-sided *Faust* record by Caruso, and a record containing two of these songs with accompaniment by Elman.

These things, Sir, are puzzling to us beginners, and if they continue you are likely to lose the support of the large number of readers who, while skimming lightly over the discussions about vectors and the angles at which pictures should be hung in The Gramophone room, regard your paper primarily as a record review.

Hoping you will take this letter as a friendly criticism,

I remain, yours sincerely,

Rathnew.

R. T.

[It would be totally against our policy to suppress a complaint such as the above, which gives us an opportunity of explaining to new readers—as we have often said in the past—that all our reviews are the opinions of individuals. The monthly pages of Analytical Notes and First Reviews are mostly written at high pressure, and often the authors of them would probably wish to qualify their first impressions after a longer acquaintance with the records. The Editor, no doubt, reads these reviews when they appear, but he is not bound to follow the opinions in his Quarterly Reviews. Sometimes he agrees, sometimes he strongly disagrees; and if any of our readers think this independent criticism lamentable we can only express regret—not repentance. On the second charge, that the Editor sometimes contradicts *himself*, we would say firstly that, in the Caruso instances given, this is almost a distortion of the facts, if the passages are read with understanding; and secondly that even if it can be proved, it is an indication of an active rather than of an erratic mind; and we regard with equanimity the threat of "the loss of the support of a large number of readers," if this is the worst complaint that they can bring against THE GRAMOPHONE.—London Ed.]

ORCHESTRAL RECORDS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I was very much interested in Mr. Gilman's letter in your October issue, and especially in the comparison of H.M.V. and Columbia recordings. Take the H.M.V. first. The Symphony Orchestra's version of *Die Meistersinger* under Albert Coates is a masterpiece of faithful tone and reproduction, and the balance of instruments is perfect. The same may be said of the Overture to *Rienzi* and the *Flying Dutchman* Overture. I have chosen Wagner because his works often necessitate a great volume for the sound-box. If the H.M.V. would only get rid of their scratch, all would be well. As for Columbia, I quote the following as very good examples of recording, balance, and surface (which is always good). Selection, *La Tosca*, and *La Bohème* (New Queen's Hall Light Orchestra), *Pierrot of the Minute* Overture, this last being perfect in detail. Now, in the "London Symphony" the balance is bad in the second and third movements, while Frank Bridge's *The Sea* seems a perfect jangle. In one of the *Planets*, *Jupiter* to wit, on the second side, in the folk tune part, there seems a curious "pull" on the sound-box, not a "boom" but a "catch." My box is a H.M.V. Exhibition No 2. Of course, it may be due to the box, but I am only stating the fact for a point of interest.

I admire the Columbia tremendously for the amount of British music brought out and, of late, symphonies also; and I should only like to support Mr. Gilman in his theory that fidelity of tone is all important.

Yours faithfully,

Hammersmith, W. 6.

I. ELLIOTT SMITH.

FLATTENING TREMOLOS.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I am in despair. As a mild (m not w please) revolutionary, I am frequently staggered—as most of the tribe are—by the entire absence in the mind of the average man of any sense of the necessity for the display of my revolutionary ideas. You and I, Mr. Editor, probably agree that the average gramophonist (not the readers of this magazine, of course) would wonder, if called upon to read your remarks as to the "chief terror, that hideous flattening tremolo," and would most likely ask "What is the man driving at?" When, however, I find such a letter, as appeared in this month's number over the signature of H. F. V. Little, I think I am entitled to express not only despair but amazement. It would seem, Mr. Editor, that you and I might have saved ourselves all those painful moments you so graphically describe, by simply turning the handle of our faulty motors! Just fancy, well, well!!

Yours faithfully,

C. BALMAIN.

P.S.—If Mr. Little really wants to know, I can tell him why your ear does not deceive you, and also why you are entitled to say that the No. 2 now has a "fair chance" to show what it can do, so that he may perceive that his further idea as to the size of the spindle is not the reason for the non-wobbling in the final notes of McCormack, as played on my machine. But that is "pure mathematics" of which, I'm sure, your readers have had their fill.—C. B.

Ashtead.

RUDDIGORE.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—I seem to remember a fairy tale of my nursery days in which the King used to repeat like a parrot the phrase: "Everything comes to him who waits." And so, after waiting patiently, we have been given the "complete" opera of *Ruddigore* duly recorded. I put "complete" in inverted commas because although the Gramophone Company claim that they are giving the whole opera, this is not strictly correct. One whole song in Act II, that assigned to Robin, beginning "Henceforth all the crimes that I find in the *Times*," is omitted, and there are various other cuts that I have noticed.

And there is another little point that puzzles me. Did Sullivan re-write the Overture? Being an extremely virtuous person, my first business on getting the records was to hunt up my piano score of the music. To my surprise the overture as recorded was quite different from that before me. It may be that the recent London production carried with it a new overture, but, if so, why? The old one answered its purpose very well.

Before dealing with the individual records I would like to say that, as usual, the general standard of recording is excellent. One thing particularly pleased me, and that was the good balance between the voices and the orchestra; in no instance, with either chorus or principals, did I have an uncomfortable feeling that there was war between instruments and vocalists with the object of deciding which could make the most noise.

As regards the overture, the wood-wind and brass were good, but I did not feel as happy about the strings except when they chanced to have a pizzicato passage, when they were really excellent.

Miss Bertha Lewis as Dame Hannah sang the *Curse* song well. She has the fault that is to be found with so many contraltos in the break between the upper and middle registers, but this is not so marked as to be unpleasant. Her enunciation was beautifully clear. The orchestra excelled itself in the accompaniment in my humble opinion.

I was not quite so pleased with Miss Elsie Griffin in *Rose Maybud's If Somebody there chanced to be*. Her words were only moderately clear and there was a tendency to shrillness in the top notes. I tried the effect of a fibre needle on one passage and it improved matters tremendously. She was distinctly better in the duet with George Baker (Robin) on the other side of the record, and the diction of both was quite good. I wish Mr. Baker did not breathe quite as heavily. At times, with an extra loud needle, there was a sound as of a rushing mighty wind that filled the house.

Derek Oldham (Richard) disappointed me with his singing of that rollicking ballad, *I shipped d'ye see*. I don't quite know what was wrong, but somehow he did not "get there." I am told that whatever the record may say he was most effective in the actual production, so the blame must to some extent be shifted from his shoulders to the broad back of the Gramophone Company. His words, however, were beautifully clear, and in the hornpipe that followed, the piccolo performed marvellous gymnastics, particularly towards the end. By the way, the other instruments seemed to get hopelessly fogged in the last very rapid passage.

The duet between Robin and Richard was really good, and the enunciation very distinct. I cannot say I was quite pleased with *The battle's roar is over*; the soprano showed a tendency to blast uncomfortably at times.

The chorus put in an amusing little bit of comedy by their own unaccompanied *Hail the Bridegroom*. It was almost possible to hear the remark of Robin's that follows their interference: "Hold your tongues will you."

The trio, *In sailing o'er life's ocean wide*, was quite good, but I liked Mad Margaret's (Miss Eileen Sharpe) *scena* and ballad much better. There was a tendency to hardness in some notes, which vanished with a fibre needle, but which rather lent itself to the part. The accompaniment here was splendid and the humour of Sullivan's orchestration brought out to the full, especially in the contrasted piccolo and bassoon passages following *But the lark and the clerk comfort me not*.

Sir Despard's song with chorus, *Why am I moody and sad?* was perfect comedy, but then one expects that from Leo Sheffield. His duet with Richard on the reverse side was also good.

The voices in the Madrigal did not seem to blend, both the tenor and the soprano being too strong. The Gavotte was charmingly played. Robin's solo, *As pure and blameless peasant*, was good, and generally speaking the Finale of Act I was quite pleasant.

¹⁰The duet of Robin and Adam at the opening of Act II was a splendid bit of work and I revelled in it, and so was the number that followed, sung by Richard and Rose.

Here was the first serious cut, the whole of the soprano verse beginning, "My hopes will be blighted, I fear," having been dropped, the record passing straight on to the ballad, *In bygone days*.

If it was necessary to miss out part of Robin's spoken address to the pictures, I think the cutting might have been better arranged. As it stands at present it is rather like nonsense, but if the words, "Oh my forefathers," had been left in, it would at least have indicated that the new baronet was addressing his ancestral portraits. In the chorus of ghosts both voices and orchestra were good, and Sir Roderic (Darrell Fancourt), despite the fact that his opening "conversation" with the pictures was severely cut, was really splendid in *The Ghosts' High Noon*.

I see your reviewer objects to the *Abandoned Person* duet as heavy. I hate to disagree with him, but perhaps I have a perverted sense of humour. The very stodginess of the singing tickled my fancy, and the stage directions that both are to be dressed in "sober black of formal cut" seems to indicate that Gilbert intended something of this sort. The orchestra here again was uncommonly good. The patter trio was enjoyable and the little undercurrent of *Matter, matter, matter*, was just sufficiently clear to be heard without disturbing the soloist.

Dame Hannah's ballad, *There grew a little flower*, was quite prettily sung, but then comes a long cut, the whole of the closing music of the opera being reduced to the few lines given to the chorus, *For happy the Lily*.

On the whole, however, we must not grumble. The surface is quite good throughout and, generally speaking, the production is excellent. I'm delighted to see that the Company have realised that flimsy envelopes fastened together with gummed paper are unsatisfactory, and the album supplied with *Ruddigore* is a good strong concern and worthy of its contents.

Having heard it all through I am now going out to buy my set, because I know quite well I shall not be happy till I own it. I do hope, however, that it won't be long before I can add *The Sorcerer* and *Princess Ida* to my library.

Yours faithfully,

W. B. HAWORTH.

NEEDLE-TRACK ALIGNMENT.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Mr. P. Wilson's articles on needle track alignment are most interesting, and while I am impressed by the authoritativeness of his reasoning, I am not convinced that his conclusions settle the matter. I do not feel competent to "enter the fray," as you expect some of us to do, but I should like to draw attention to one consideration which Mr. Wilson seems to ignore so that he or others may deal with it.

He aims at finding a setting of tone-arm and sound-box such that the plane of the diaphragm shall make the smallest possible angle with the tangent to the groove in which the needle rests and does so with a position where this angle is less than 2° throughout the swing of the tone-arm. In order to get this, however, he uses a considerable divergence between the diaphragm plane and the axis (vector) of the tone-arm (in his example with 9in. arm it is $20^\circ 30'$), so that, although the diaphragm plane is practically on the line of the tangent, the tone-arm axis is far from it. Mr. Wilson does not refer to this so I do not know why he thinks it unimportant as presumably he does. The cross strains on the sound-box from the serrations are certainly eliminated, but there must be in this position a side-thrust on the needle just as there is on the wheels of a car going round a curve, except that in the case of a gramophone, it is the curve that goes round and the needle which ought to be stationary.

The needle is held in position by the tone-arm and record, the former keeps it upright and holds it from moving except across a segment of which the vector is the radius, the latter takes the weight of the sound-box, but also, when revolving tends to move it in the direction of the tangent. This force can be resolved into two, one of which is in line with the vector and one at right angles to the tangent; the former is neutralised by the tone-arm, but the latter is the one to which I want to draw attention. It can only be met by the resistance of the groove, so we have a force pushing against one side of the groove and away from the other. To what extent this matters to the reproduction and to making friction noise I hope some expert may explain. Mr. Wilson tells us of the good results from putting his theory into practice, and this is the most convincing argument of all, but against this I have seen a machine recently of which the complaint was made that the needle frequently jumped the outside groove and slipped towards

the centre; this was a recent model of one of the best-known firms and had the tone-arm set so that the needle overhung the centre.

The position of the recording needle would seem likely to have some influence, and information as to this would be interesting.

I know nothing about this, but assume that it is fed across the disc mechanically so that the serrations are equal on each side of the grooves.

Mr. Wilson (Part 2, Section 3) refers to the wear and surface noise being greater on the outside of the record; does not the difference in surface speed have a good deal to do with this?

Yours faithfully,

Basingstoke.

G. RAYMOND.

* * *

Mr. Wilson replies:—I had not overlooked the point to which Mr. Raymond refers, but did not mention it because I hadn't space to discuss all the errors of pivoted tone-arms. Perhaps the following observations will satisfy Mr. Raymond.

In the first place side pressure is most easily created, and therefore cured, by altering the balance of the tone-arm. If the axis is not exactly vertical the walls of the groove have to carry part of the weight. Apart from this, side pressure depends on two other factors besides needle friction—viz., the frictional torque at the tone-arm pivot and the dynamical torque due to the fact that the angular velocity of the tone-arm is not constant. It should also be noted that by reducing tracking error we decrease the magnitude of the frictional force on the needle. If those two torques were negligible (which they aren't, as a rule) and if the needle friction were the same in the two settings, we should certainly increase the side pressure by making the needle overhang the spindle, though the increase would not be very substantial. Even if it were, its effect would still be negligible compared with the undoubtedly advantages of tangential tracking.

In my October article I laid special emphasis on the effect of undamped impulses and only touched lightly upon the effect of steady friction. The latter depends largely upon the shape and material of the needle and the way in which it fits the groove, and is therefore more amenable to microscopic than to mathematical analysis. Moreover the impulses have a gouging effect and operate largely via the needle point. Steady pressure has a rubbing effect and operates principally via the smooth sides of the needle. (You will hurt yourself less by rubbing a smooth hard body than if you vary the pressure by sudden blows—e.g., by giving your knuckles a twist during rubbing!) That is my explanation of the fact that records give way first at heavy notes of high frequency. If tracking error is substantial the gouging is mostly on the walls of the groove and therefore gradually modifies the wave form. The rubbing, being unsymmetrically disposed to the groove, has a similar, though smaller, effect.

After hearing Mr. G. W. Webb's illuminating lecture at the Brixton Gramophone Society in October, I have modified my views of rubbing effect in several ways, though my main conclusions have been reinforced. Mr. Webb's models, made after microscopic examination and measurement, show quite clearly that even if "impulsive wear" were absent, tangential tracking would still be a great advantage.

As regards wear at the outside, I agree that my statement was rather too sweeping in its terms. There are at least three contributory causes: Tracking error, linear speed, and the way in which the needle fits the groove. Mr. Webb has shown that although the angle of the groove is nearer 90° than 60°, no steel needle point reaches to the bottom of the groove at the start.

I have never seen a machine in which, the turn-table being horizontal and the tone-arm axis vertical, the needle tends to jump the groove, though I can understand that happening if the needle is made to overhang the spindle and no "divergence" is used. In that case tracking error is increased and a greater weight is needed to keep the needle in contact. For experimental purposes I have recently fitted a weight adjuster to my corrected tone-arm and find that I can still keep the needle in track and get good results with a weight on the record of substantially less than one ounce. I hasten to add that I do not recommend so light a weight: it wears the record too much at places where the serrations are heavy and closely packed. I only mention the point to show that tangential tracking actually improves the contact between needle and groove.

P. WILSON.

THE RE-CREATION.

(To the Editor of THE GRAMOPHONE.)

DEAR SIR,—Referring to the very interesting letter by Mr. Hilliard, of Johannesburg, I would recommend readers to play records, having drum parts inaudible with a needle, in this way.

They will certainly be surprised at the result. In the Editor's interesting article, "The New Edison," he states that "the lower half of the sound-box hangs by a piece of silk from the upper half." On inspection I think it will be found that the silk cord is attached at one end to the stylus bar and at the other to the diaphragm transmitting the sound vibrations. The lower half of the box is partly supported by a flat piece of tempered steel. The Edison reproducer feed device causes far less wear and tear on a needle-cut record than the usual "makeshift" gramophone tone-arm.

The Edison Company's fondness for 'cello, flute and harp dates from the days of the 100 thread wax gold-moulded cylinder, a record which had no great volume but extraordinary fidelity of tone and no surface noise.

Has the Editor ever heard the Blue Amberol 200-thread celluloid cylinder? The direct recordings of 1913-1915 would, I think, interest him.

Hampstead.

I am, yours truly,

"EDISONITE."

Notes and Acknowledgments.

Mr. B. L. MAIN is making one of his gramophones for the office, and this will be installed at Frith Street before Christmas. By the courtesy of the makers, to whom our best thanks are due, it will be fitted with (1) a *Motophone*, and (2) an *H. M. V. No. 2 Sound-box*. If any of our readers are anxious to hear the machine, they will be very welcome at the office; but it is advisable to make an appointment beforehand.

* * *

It has been raining CATALOGUES, and among the most interesting are: *Beltona* gramophone accessories from the Murdoch Trading Co., and the *Gramophone Exchange* booklet, which are so fascinating as to make the money leap in your pocket; a clever folding leaflet of *Sesame* record cabinets, another leaflet of *Jussrite* cabinets, and a third—to add to mental confusion—of the new *Globe-Wernicke "Elastic"* cabinet, all of which should be considered carefully by anyone who wants to find the neatest way of storing records; there are very strong points in favour of each kind of cabinet. Moreover, there are the new *Columbia*, *Vocalion*, and *Velvet Face* catalogues which are less cryptically arranged than hitherto—or else we are becoming more nimble-witted in the search for a particular record.

* * *

The *Chesterian* for November is as good as ever and contains an article on Albeniz, by Mr. Sydney Grew, which is particularly interesting in relation to his articles in our Player-piano Supplement on the same subject. From Messrs. Chester, too, come three more of their charming "Miniature Essays," in French and English (6d. each), on Josef Holbrooke, Gustav Holst, and Jean Sibelius. We must also acknowledge, from the Oxford University Press, "A Survey of Contemporary Music," by Cecil Gray, and "The New Music," by George Dyson, both of which will be reviewed next month.

* * *

The high opinion of the *Jewel Sound-box* formed by the piano record testers on another page is endorsed by Captain H. T. Barnett, who writes that it is "as good as most 65 mm. boxes for needle-cut records, but for use with Pathé and Edison discs it is the best box I know. I cordially recommend it to all those who have 'trombone' goose-neck machines with the sound-box carried to the left of the tone-arm and with bad needle-track alignment, because the length of the jointed neck brings the sound-box well to the right of the tone-arm and so greatly improves the needle-track alignment." Conversely, of course, it is unwise to use it with machines which already have a correct alignment.

* * *

Signs of trade prosperity continue, and one of them is the opening of new showrooms in London. The *SESAME* people came from Stockport to Whitcomb Street not long ago, and now we hear that the *Lenthall Gramophone Co.* have opened some premises in North Audley Street, where some of their very fine models may be seen. We wish Mr. Lenthall the best of luck in his venture. It is pleasant to notice that the *Lenthall* gramophone is still advertised in this paper. We hear of other firms who dare not advertise their wares because they are already overwhelmed with orders! This is the sort of prosperity with which we can only sympathise in a half-hearted way.

(Continued on p. 264.)

TRANSLATIONS

(Contributed by Mr. H. F. V. LITTLE)

A GRANADA (To Granada)

(Alvarez.)

Caruso, H.M.V., D.B.592, 12in., d.s., red.

Alhambra de mis sueños, mi dulce nido,
Alhambra of my dreams, my sweet nest,
 Comoquieres que el alma te eche en olvido, te eche en olvido.
How can you think I am casting you out of my thoughts.

Granada bella, gloria de Andalucía,
Beautiful Granada, the glory of Andaluzia,
 Tu eres mi estrella, tu eres mi estrella,
You are my star, you are my star,
 Granada bella, tu eres mi estrella.

En tu sagrado suelo rodó mi cuna,
In your sacred land my cradle was rocked,
 Contempló mis amores tu blanca luna.
Your silvery moon witnessed my love-making.
 Bella sultana, bella sultana,
Beautiful queen, beautiful queen,
 Por ti lloran mis ojos tarde y mañana, tarde y mañana.
My eyes are weeping for you night and morning.

Campana de la Vela, tu dulce acento
Bells of La Vela, your sweet chimes
 No formara mi gozo ni mi tormento ;
Will afford me neither joy nor pain ;
 Que tu sonido, que tu sonido es la voz de Granada,
For your sound is the voice of Granada,
 De un bien perdido, de un bien perdido.
The voice of a happiness lost to me.

Adios mi paraíso del Alpujarra,*
Farewell, Alpujarra, my paradise,
 Mi corazon te mando con mi guitarra, con mi guitarra.
As I play my guitar I send you my heart.
 Adios mi encanto, no te olvides te pido
Farewell my enchanted spot, pray do not forget
 Del que ama tanto, del que ama tanto,
One who loves you so much, who loves you so well.
 Ay no te olvides del que amo tanto.

* A suburb of Granada.

AY, AY, AY

(Osman Perez.)

Fleta, H.M.V., D.B.525, 12in., d.s., red.

Asomate a la ventana, ay, ay, ay, paloma del alma mia,
Peep out from your window, oh ! do ! dove of my life,
 Asomate a la ventana, ay, ay, ay, paloma del alma mia,
Que ya la aurora temprana nos viene anunciar el dia,
For the early dawn comes to herald the approach of day.
 Que ya la aurora temprana, ay, ay, ay, nos viene anunciar
 el dia.

Si alguna vez en el pecho, ay, ay, ay, el cariño no lo abrigas,
If sometimes in your heart, alas, you shelter no love for me,
 Si alguna vez en el pecho, ay, ay, ay, el cariño no lo abrigas,
Enganalo como a un niño, pero nunca se lo digas,
Pretend to me as if I were a child, but don't let me know about it.
 Enganalo como a un nino, ay, ay, ay, pero nunca se lo digas.

El amor mio se muere, ay, ay, ay, y se me muere de frio,
My love is dying, alas, it is dying of cold,
 El amor mio se muere, ay, ay, ay, y se me muere de frio,
Porque en tu pecho de piedra tu noquieres darle abrigo,
Because in your stony heart you will not give it refuge,
 Porque en tu pecho de piedra, ay, ay, ay, tu noquieres darle
 abrigo.

On the record the second verse is omitted.

CLAVELITOS (Pretty Carnations)

(Valverde.)

Galli-Curci, H.M.V., D.A.215, 10in., d.s., red.
 Bori, H.M.V., D.A.131, 10in., d.s., red.

¡ Clavelitos ! ¡ A quién le doy claveles ?
Sweet carnations ! Who'll have my carnations ?
 Clavelitos, para los churumbeles.
Pretty carnations, for the nice boys.
 Clavelitos, que los doy con los ojos cerraoz,
Lovely carnations, which I offer to all,
 Y los traigo en el cesto a precio modesto rojos y píntaos.
I bring in my basket, all very cheap, red ones and others.
 Clavelitos de la tierra adorao,
Sweet carnations from my own dear land,
 Clavelitos que vienen de Granada,
Pretty carnations that come from Granada,
 Clavelitos, que los traigo yo aquí para ti,
Lovely carnations I've brought here for you,
 Y que tienen la esencia, presencia y potencia que usté vera
 en mi.
*Which have the charm, the grace and the fascination you can
 see in me.*

*¡ Clavelitos ! que los traigo bonitos ;
Sweet carnations ! I bring lovely ones ;
 Pa mi novio los traigo reventaoz de chipé,
I bring them, in all their rich beauty, for my lover,
 Porque tiene muchismo quinqué pa robar corazones ; olé !
For at breaking hearts he is such a splendid fellow, hurrah !
 Y enseñartes la esencia, presencia y potencia que ya sabe usté.
And he is charming, graceful and fascinating, as you know.
 Si tu mequieres, mi niño cariño,
If you love me, my dearest boy,
 Yo te daré un clavelito bonito,
I will give you a lovely carnation,

Y veras que bien machamos
And you'll see how well we get on
 Si estamos juntos en un rinconcito.
When we're alone in a nice cosy corner.
 Si tu mequieres, serrano del alma,
If you love me, boy of my heart,
 Yo te quiero mas a ti mi cariño,
I will love you still more, my dear,
 Y todos los clavelitos bonitos, todos seran para ti,*
And all my sweet and lovely carnations, all shall be for you,
 Todos son para ti, para ti, para ti, para ti.
All for you, for you, for you, for you.

The section marked * is sung twice.



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E.10.	THE MASTERPIECE. Solid Mahogany Chippendale Cabinet. Section for Storing 100 Records. British Garrard d.s. Motor, needle cups, patent automatic stop	50 gns.

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WANDERERS NACHTLIED

(Rubenstein.)

G. Farrar and E. Schumann-Heink, Victor, 87504, 10in.

Aller Berge Gipfel ruh'n in dunkler Nacht,
The peace and darkness of night covers all the mountain peaks,
 Aller Bäume Wipfel ruh'n, kein Vöglein wacht,
Every tree-top is still, not one little bird is awake,
 Rauscht kein Blatt im Walde, überall ist Ruh',
Not a leaf stirs in the forest, peace reigns everywhere,
 Warte, Wand'r'er, balde, balde ruh'st auch du.
Wait, wanderer, shortly, shortly you too will rest.

The remainder is repetition.

MORGEN (To-morrow)

(Richard Strauss.)

Gerhardt, Vocalion, B.3112, 10in., d.s., pink.

Und morgen wird die Sonne wieder scheinen,
To-morrow the sun will shine again,
 Und auf dem Wege den ich gehen werde
And, along the pathway that I shall follow,
 Wird uns, die Glücklichen, sie wieder einen
Us happy mortals it will once more unite
 Inmitten dieser sonnenatmenden Erde.
In the midst of this sun-breathing earth.
 Und zu dem Strand, dem weiten, wogenblauen,
And to that far-off shore, blue with waves,
 Werden wir still und langsam niedersteigen.
Slowly and peacefully we shall go down.
 Stumm werden wir uns in die Augen schauen,
Without speaking, we shall gaze into each other's eyes,
 Und auf uns sinkt des Glückes stummes Schweigen.
And upon us will descend the perfect silence of happiness.

WORDS WANTED BY READERS

- (1) "Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio" from "Figaro" (Mozart).
- (2) "Spargi d'amaro pianto" from "Lucia di Lammermoor" (Donizetti).
- (3) "Sevillana" from "Don César de Bazan" (Massenet).
- (4) "Obéissons quand leur voix appelle" from "Manon" (Massenet).
- By T. H. Adams, 60, Peter Street, Workington, Cumberland.
- (5) "Invictus" (Hahn), Norman Allin, Columbia 2669.
- (6) "The Blind Ploughman" (C. Clarke), Norman Allin, Columbia 2669.
- (7) "I know of two bright eyes" (Clutsam), Frank Mullings, Columbia 2695.
- (8) "The Gentle Maiden" (Somervell), Frank Mullings, Columbia 2695.
- (9) "Wo find' ich Trost" and "Du Bist die Ruh," by Wolf and Schubert. H.M.V., D.B.766. John McCormack.
- (10) "O del mio amato ben," Aria by Donaudy; H.M.V., D.A.627. John McCormack.
- (11) "The snowy-breasted Pearl" and "Come back to Erin"; H.M.V., D.B.344. John McCormack.
- (12) "Angel's Serenade" and "Ave Maria" (Schubert); H.M.V., D.B.578. John McCormack.
- (13) Schubert's "Serenade" and "Ave Maria" ("Cavalleria"); H.M.V., D.A.458. John McCormack.
- (14) "When night descends" and "O cease thy singing, maiden fair," both by Rachmaninoff; H.M.V., D.A.457. John McCormack.
- By J. Elliott-Smith, 7, The Broadway, Hammersmith, W. 6.

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Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht.
Silent night, holy night.
 Alles schläft; einsam wacht
All are sleeping: only the beloved,
 Nur das trauta hochheilige Paar.
Most holy couple keep a lonely watch.
 Holde Knabe mit lockigem Haar,
Charming baby with curly hair,
 Schlaf' in himmlischer Ruh'.
Sleep in Heavenly repose.

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht.
 Hirten erst Kund gebracht.
Shepherds first brought the tidings.
 Durch der Engel alleluja
Through the angels' Hallelujah
 Tönt es laut von fern und nah,
Near and far there loudly sounds,
 "Christ der Retter ist da!"
"Christ the Saviour is here!"

Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht.
 Gottes Sohn! o wie lacht
The Son of God! oh! how love
 Lieb aus seinem göttlichen Mund,
Smiles on His divine mouth,
 Da uns naht die rettende Stund,
As the hour of Redemption nears us,
 Christ, in deiner Geburt.
Christ, in Thy birth.

The records omit the second verse.



FRIEDA HEMPEL'S CONCERT.

The Albert Hall certainly resembles a circus, but rarely does such an exhibition of bad taste degrade the circus ring as it did Madam Hempel's concert. This singer, ravishing to behold, equipped with a beautiful voice and astonishing technique, capable of singing the finest lieder, was content to give a wearying exhibition of platform histrionics and to display her great gifts in an ill-chosen programme of songs of very varying merit. The last encore, too generously contributed, I heard her give was *Dixieland!* Shade of Brahms, two of whose songs she had previously sung exquisitely! I can find no words strong enough to condemn Mr. John Amadio's performance on the flute, which he made to imitate winds in the trees, a storm, etc., to the vast delight of the audience. Solito de Solis was also content to give mere displays of virtuosity. I came away more in sorrow than in anger determined to seek the consolation of my gramophone.

J.

HELEN HENSCHEL.

After the notice given in the March number (vol. i, p. 216), of Miss Henschel's first recital at the Wigmore Hall one would have imagined that one of the recording companies would have secured records of her exquisite singing and playing. The second recital on Nov. 7th confirmed every impression that I had of her, and I shall not rest until I have secured the power to encore *Le Jardin d'Amour* on my gramophone again and again!

C. S.

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Analytical Notes and First Reviews

THE PATHETIC SYMPHONY

PARLOPHONE.—E.10207-10212 (six 12in. records in album, 31s. 6d.).—The Opera House Orchestra, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Symphonie Pathétique*, No. 6, in B minor (Tchaikovsky).

(Analytical note unavoidably held over till the January number.)



THE UNFINISHED SYMPHONY

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D. 934, 935, 936 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, conducted by Sir Landon Ronald: *Unfinished Symphony* in B minor (Schubert).

Charwomen must have been different in Schubert's day, else how should that dusty pile of manuscripts valued at 8s. 6d. have been preserved for us after his death. Assuredly it would have found eternal rest in a dustbin! As it was the heap was retained by Ferdinand, Schubert's brother, who seems to have had small appreciation of its contents. It seems certain it contained the *Unfinished Symphony*, a work written in 1822, six years before Schubert's death, and, no doubt, tossed aside and forgotten like many another. It remained unknown and unpublished until 1868, forty years after Schubert died. We may be glad the composer did no more than sketch a third movement—nine bars of it only exist—for he might, had he completed this, have added a fourth, thus delivering the symphony over to that prolixity and lack of artistic discipline that mar so much of his work. His friends, indeed, fully aware of his weakness, urged on him the necessity of adopting Beethoven's laborious process of composition—constant revision—but he would not entertain for a moment this imitation of his idol. Moreover, he professed himself to be incapable of understanding how anyone could work in such a way. Here, at any rate, we have two perfectly balanced movements, full, as all Schubert's music is, of his joy in contriving lovely sound through melody and modulation. The range of orchestral colour is small indeed, but unfailing of effect. The tragic purpose of the first movement is inescapable; few themes fall so fatefully on the ear as that first tune uprising from the depths. It colours the whole passage of the music. The oboe and clarinet tune over agitated strings tells of sad failure, an impression momentarily dispelled by the exquisite lyricism of the 'cello melody which follows. This suffers a sudden interruption, and we are plunged into strife, though the last melody endeavours to hold its own! The end, a tremendous sigh of despair, is infinitely more pessimistic than the finale of Tchaikovsky's *Sixth Symphony*, which is merely the sinking of a troubled soul to rest. Here it is a gesture of hopeless defiance against too heavy odds. There is not bitterness but a great, though not unbroken, peace in the last movement. Friend talks lovelily to friend, affirming for a moment the essential nobility of man's spirit, then passing into exquisite spiritual intercourse. Here is music passionately loved by the ordinary humble human being to whom Schubert, the musician of democracy, addressed his message. At last we have a complete and beautiful recording—repeats even are noticed. There is neither hurry nor undue lingering; it is a worthy interpretation.

N. P.

NOTE. The Catalogue of MINIATURE SCORES issued by Messrs Goodwin and Tabb (1924), Ltd., was included in every copy of the October number and can be obtained by new readers from THE GRAMOPHONE Office.

MOZART'S CONCERTO IN A

COLUMBIA.—L.1592-1595 (four 12in. records in album, 37s. 6d.).—Arthur Catterall (violin) and orchestra conducted by Hamilton Harty: Concerto in A major (K.219) (Mozart). (G. and T., 2s.)

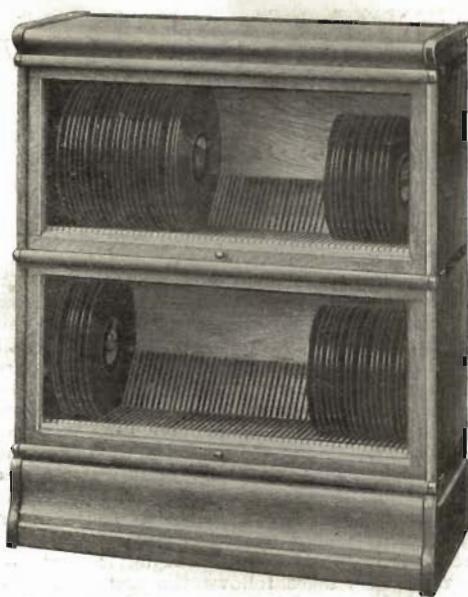
The various recording companies seem to have discovered during the last few months that there are a lot of orchestral works by one Mozart that are worthy of their attention. At any rate, this composer cannot now complain of neglect. The concerto before us was bound to come sooner or later in any case, and there will be few readers of THE GRAMOPHONE that will not hail its appearance with enthusiasm. Surely the most graceful and courtly of composers never wrote anything more graceful and courtly than this. Here are no broad or grand effects, no fireworks for the solo instrument. Mozart seems to have been inspired simply by the pure joy of melody and the loveliness of string tone. It is notable that he employs no percussion and only two oboes and two horns out of the wind family—and even these are used very sparingly.

The construction of the concerto contains several points of interest. The violins open the first movement with a delicate subject that instantly suggested Agag to my ribald mind. After some unison passages follows the second theme, a descending passage of four semiquavers followed by three repeated *staccato* notes, also allotted to the violins, as, indeed, are all the principal tunes in the concerto. A full close concludes this part of the movement, and the *Tempo* changes to *Adagio* for the entry of the solo violin. The short section which follows consists of new material, though there are subtle links connecting it with what has gone before. Soon we come back to the *Allegro* and the strings give out the first subject once more, while the solo plays an *obbligato* above them. The whole of the first part of the movement (not including the *Adagio*) is now repeated in an expanded version and with considerable embellishment. This completes the *First Side*. The *Second Side* opens with the "development," which, in consideration of the length of the previous section, Mozart has made very short, and in which the references to the earlier part of the movement are comparatively slight. After this we return to the first subject (in the form in which it appeared after the *Adagio*) and both subjects are repeated in the usual way, although Mozart has still further expanded his material. The *Third Side* contains the *coda* and includes a *cadenza* for the solo instrument. This made me realise what a poor thing a *cadenza* is; the one that is chosen is quite a good one and finely played, and I daresay that if I had had the soloist visible before me I should have been happy enough. But as he was not there I had the feeling that I was listening to something that was not an organic part of the work, and I was impatient to get back to Mozart. When the composer himself writes the *cadenza* and brings it in effectively—as Schumann did in his *Piano Concerto*—it may, I admit, be a different matter.

The slow movement is a pure joy from beginning to end. The violins present us one after the other with a whole string of melodic gems which are then repeated and decorated with the help of the solo violin (*Side Four*). *Side Five* begins with a development in which some of the ideas already suggested are carried a little farther. The return to the opening tune is accomplished by means of a beautiful passage in which the instruments imitate one another and the movement is rounded off by a re-statement (with slight alterations) of the embellished version of the first section which we heard on the previous side. Alas, that I should have to draw attention to a slight cut, the omission of bars 120 to 125 (unless my counting is at fault).

Side Six opens with a minuet, a movement very rarely found in a concerto, and from henceforth, as will be seen, the structure of the work is very original. The violins play the principal tune to which the solo replies with a contrasted idea. A second time the orchestra gives out its theme and this time Mr. Catterall's answer is more complete though on similar lines. A third repetition of the first subject he caps with a dainty *coda*.

Side Seven opens with what promises to be a brilliant *Finale*. But the music seems unable to get going. There are a lot of short sections, several new ideas are introduced, and the soloist is very insistent with the quick phrase that he plays first at the beginning of the movement; but each train of thought seems to lead to a dead end. Eventually (*Side Eight*) the minuet comes to the rescue.



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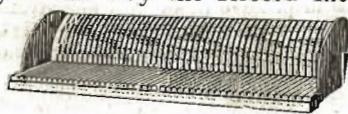
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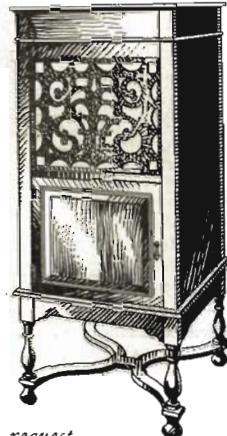
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The solo violin suddenly remembers it and plays through the original tune of it, afterwards supplying an answer similar to those given before. Next there comes a final version of the minuet tune (slightly varied), the soloist again taking the lead, and the concerto is concluded with the original *coda* to the minuet movement.

Mr. Catterall's playing is that of a man who knows what Mozart ought to be, and has the technique to give expression to his conception. The orchestra, too, thoroughly enter into the dainty spirit of the work which is almost ideally reproduced in the smooth Columbia surface.

P. P.

LEONORA OVERTURE

PARLOPHONE.—E.10199, 10200 (12in., 4s. 6d. each).—**Opera House Orchestra**, conducted by Dr. Weissmann: *Leonora Overture* (Beethoven).

Beethoven only wrote one opera, but to this he devoted an amount of time and trouble that was exceptional even for him. For details of the two versions of the work (first as *Leonora* and secondly as *Fidelio*) and of the four overtures which he composed at one time or another, I must refer readers to "Grove"; there is no space for such matters here. It must suffice to say that only one of the overtures was entitled *Fidelio*, the others being numbered nowadays *Leonora* overtures, Nos. 1, 2, and 3, though this does not correctly indicate the order in which they were composed. *Leonora* No. 3 is in reality a revised addition of No. 2, and students of composition will find much food for thought in comparing the two and considering what it was that induced Beethoven to make the various alterations that are to be found.

In the haste of getting to press I have not had time to compare these records with such others as may exist. I remember that there is quite a good one by H.M.V., although there may possibly be a cut in this (is it not on three sides?). At any rate, the Parlophone version is uncut. The recording, too, is fully adequate, the brass coming out particularly well in several places. The *pianissimo* passages are the least successful, the instruments playing so softly that they are hardly audible once or twice; indeed, on one occasion I lost the violins altogether. But, at any rate, this implies a good range of dynamic contrast.

The overture lies on the border-line between the old and the new style. Originally an overture was an independent piece of music having no connection with the opera it preceded. Nowadays it is often (as in the case of *Tristan and Isolde*) a sort of concentrated essence of the play. *Leonora* No. 3 is perfectly self-contained and can be played as an independent piece. On the other hand it contains elements, notably the trumpet calls at the beginning of the third side of the record, which are closely connected with the drama that follows.

Side One contains the slow and majestic introduction with which the overture begins. This needs no comment, but I rather wish the Company would overcome its exaggerated respect for bar-lines. The end of the side leaves us in the air; one note more would have resolved the harmony. Surely we might have had it even if it does involve stepping over a double bar!

Side Two gives us the two main tunes. The first of these comes at the very beginning on the strings and undergoes considerable development before the horns, flute, and strings give us the strongly contrasted second subject. The music runs straight on into the development, which is concerned with both subjects, though the principal feature is, perhaps, the treatment of the opening phrase of the first subject.

Side Three continues the development. Close to the beginning come the two trumpet calls which, as I have already said, refer to the most dramatic moment in the opera to which the overture is a prelude. They are followed by a new tune first heard on flutes and clarinets, and then the music gathers itself together for a return to the first subject. The recapitulation of the two main themes is quite regular and the side ends just as we reach the *coda*.

It is this *coda* with which *Side Four* is occupied. The *Tempo* soon changes from *Allegro* to *Presto* at a dramatic point when a rapid whirling figure appears first on two or three violins, to which gradually the remaining violins and the rest of the strings are added, the whole culminating in a victorious statement of the first theme of the *Allegro*. The peroration that follows is one of the most magnificent things in music. All the orchestra joins in (including the drums, which are exceptionally distinct) and the overture ends in the glowing colours of victory.

P. P.

HUGH THE DROVER

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.—D. 922-926 (12in., 6s. 6d. each).—**Hugh the Drover**, (Vaughan Williams),—Vocalists: Mary Lewis, Constance Willis, Nellie Walker, Tudor Davies, Frederick Collier, Peter Dawson, William Anderson, etc., and chorus. Orchestra conducted by Malcolm Sargent.

- Nos. 1 and 2.—The Fair. Two Parts.
- No. 3.—The Morris Men.
- No. 4.—The Song of Hugh the Drover.
- No. 5.—The Love Duet.
- No. 6.—The Challenge and the Fight.
- No. 7.—May Morning.
- No. 8.—Mary sets Hugh free.
- No. 9.—Mary joins Hugh in the Stocks.
- No. 10.—The Sergeant releases Hugh.

Comparatively few people can yet have heard this opera, so it is to be hoped they will not fight shy of these delightful records. English people do not greatly care for novelties, but this opera deserves their enthusiastic support, for it is, without jingoism, absolutely English. It had lain for many years in Dr. Vaughan Williams' desk while commonplace operas such as *de Lara's Nail* were produced at Covent Garden and elsewhere. Now it should take its place without question in the current operatic repertoire. The libretto is well written and the plot coherent though uneventful. As the essentials of the story must be grasped before hearing the music, you would do well to make certain of securing the excellent leaflet issued with the records. The traditional tunes used in the opera are:—Act I.: *Cockles, Toy Lambs, Primroses, Maria Martin, Tuesday Morning*. Act II.: *Psalm tune, York*, played on the bells at the opening of the act; *May-day Carol* (two versions); and the *Drinking Song*. These represent only a small number of the lovely tunes lavishly scattered throughout the opera by the composer. His own melodies are tinged, as might be expected, with a strongly modal flavour.

Particularly beautiful are *Aunt Jane's Song* and *Hugh's Song* (records 3 and 4). There is a good deal of very effective choral writing. The shifting requirements of the libretto never find the composer at a loss; when he has a chance to do a little orchestral tone-painting, as in the *May morning* scene, he uses it excellently. The whole opera sounds delightfully fresh and fragrant. Necessary cuts make the music sound a little disjointed here and there.

The palm for fine singing goes to a new gramophone artiste, Constance Willis, whose interpretation of *Aunt Jane's* music could not be bettered. Mary Lewis is not so successful; occasionally she shows a tendency to scoop, and her intonation is not impeccable, but it is only fair to say that her part is far from easy. She certainly is adequate. Tudor Davies sings better than I have ever heard him before; his big song is magnificently done. Of the minor parts William Anderson's singing of a few bars (as the Constable) on the ninth record stands out prominently. The chorus are consistently good. The recording is worthy of high praise. Not only is the peculiar atmosphere of the music preserved, but the difficult choral sections come out very well. The public should reward this enterprise.

N. P.

BRUNSWICK

50050 (12in., 8s.).—**Maria Ivogün** (soprano): *Liebesfreud* (Kreisler) and *O lovely May* (R. Strauss).
 15074 (10in., 5s. 6d.).—**Michael Bohnen** (bass): *Freischütz* (Weber) and *If power divine for once were mine* (Amthor-Binder).
 20023 (12in., 5s. 6d.).—**Capitol Grand Orchestra**: *Cleopatra and the Golden Cup* and *Dance of the Trojan Maidens* from the *Ballet Music of Faust* (Gounod).

Those who were privileged to hear Maria Ivogün's extraordinary performance as *Zerbinetta* in Strauss's *Ariadne*—perhaps the most difficult coloratura part in existence—will know that there is nothing she cannot do with her voice. It has a flutey quality that no other contemporary singer has except Claire Dux (and she does not record well), and possesses a technique second to none. The desire to display this must be great, but I wish Ivogün had chosen worthier material than these two palpable arrangements of instrumental music; they are exquisitely sung. I cannot believe Richard Strauss ever wrote *O lovely May*; the music bears the strong imprint of Johann Strauss. Curiously enough the former composer has written a song called *O susser mai*. There is some muddle here. It is pleasant to find the Weber arias being recorded nowadays. Michael Bohnen has a magnificent voice, and his declamation is

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CATHEDRAL CHOIR, Male Voices with Orchestra	
2162 { ASLEEP IN THE DEEP ..	Lamb-Petrie
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very fine. The accompaniment is good, though played on a brass band. Anyone slightly flushed with wine would find this song irresistible. It is sung in German. The reverse, hardly what the bulletin calls a "worthy compeer," is quite inoffensive. *Cleopatra and the Golden Cup* is the second movement of the *Faust Ballet Music*. First comes a luscious melody on the G string of the violins; this is followed by a twittering tune, also on the strings, and then back to the raspberry, vinegar, and sherbet. The reverse is the *Dance of the Trojan Maidens*, a similar kind of cloying melody. This music is the counterpart of the old Empire ballets, and has a certain waxen charm. The labelling is inaccurate here as the above dance is followed by the third movement, *Dance Antique*, a French version of Grieg's *Dance in the Hall of the Mountain King*. The recording is excellent.

VELVET FACE

611 (12in., 4s. 6d.)—**Band of H.M. Scots Guards: Rienzi Overture** (Wagner).
 1116 (10in., 3s.)—**Band of H.M. Scots Guards: Crown Diamonds Selection** (Auber).
 609 (12in., 4s. 6d.)—**London Light Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Crufit: Carmen Selection** (Bizet).
 1113 (10in., 3s.)—**Jean Melville (piano): Hungarian Rhapsody No. 12** (Liszt).
 610 (12in., 5s. 6d.)—**Zacherewitsch (violin): Hymn to the Sun from Coq d'Or** (Rimsky-Korsakoff) and **Rondo** (Mozart-Kreisler).
 612, 613 (12in., 5s. 6d.)—**London Wind Quintette (with piano): Sextette** (Thuille).
 1112 (10in., 3s.)—**Ugo Donarelli (baritone): Mephisto's Serenade and Aria della Rosa from Faust** (Berlioz).
 1114 (10in., 3s. 6d.)—**Norman Williams (basso-cantante): When a Maiden takes your fancy from Il Seraglio** (Mozart) and **Il lacerato spirito from Simon Boccanegra** (Verdi). In English.
 1115 (10in., 3s. 6d.)—**Tatiana Makushina (soprano): The Sea** (Rimsky-Korsakoff) and **The Flower** (Gretchaninoff). In Russian.
 1117 (10in., 3s. 6d.)—**Nicola Fusati (tenor): Questa o quella from Rigoletto** (Verdi) and **Addio florito asil from Madame Butterfly** (Puccini).

Scots Guards.—The band has done its best in the *Rienzi Overture*, with music that is obviously better suited to an orchestral medium. The recording is very successful as regards volume of sound, but this has involved sacrifices in other directions, and the result is a good deal of roughness and a nasty "edge" on the tone. One longs for the strings, but, on the other hand, a glance at the instruments used by Wagner in the original score, which include ophicleide and serpent besides the usual brass and a vast array of percussion, makes one realise that one has after all much to be thankful for. The overture belongs to the class known as "French Overtures," and consists of a slow movement followed by a quick one. The theme of *Rienzi's* prayer, heard near the beginning, and often later on, will be easily recognised. I do not propose to give an analysis here, as the work is considerably cut. The *Crown Diamonds* selection is music of a less ambitious and also, be it said, less blatant variety; at all events, when it comes to a band arrangement. I thought the playing and recording very good here.

London Light Orchestra.—*Carmen* is a work that never grows old. However familiar one may be with the music one can always enjoy it again, provided it is well played. This condition is fulfilled here, and I spent a very pleasant few minutes listening to the record. I have only two trifling complaints to make. I thought we had rather too large a dose of the *Toreador* considering the brevity of the selection, and I wondered whether it was quite advisable to have so much of the castanets. They are delightful now and then, but they become intensely irritating before long. The record only stopped just in time.

Liszt Rhapsody.—Another version of the already over-recorded Liszt No. 12! I remembered that even De Greef's double-sided twelve-inch rendering (H.M.V.)—the best I know—had a cut, so that I was not surprised to find a considerable mutilation here on a ten-inch. Liszt's rhapsodical style suffers less than other people's from this sort of treatment, and it was a positive relief to be spared some of the barrel organ effects at the end. Still I could have borne with this if the rest had been complete. Jean Melville has a fine technique, although her interpretation is a little petulant at times. The reproduction of the loud passages leaves something to be desired, but the soft parts are really excellent.

Zacherewitsch.—Kreisler's arrangement of this Mozart *Rondo* makes quite a pleasant piece, although I have an idea that it involves considerable departures from the original. Zacherewitsch's playing is fully equal to the considerable demands made on it, and the result is some very agreeable music. But I can only describe the travesty of the *Hymn to the Sun* as outrageous. The first verse is tolerable apart from some uncalled-for chords on the violin, but words fail me to describe the second, to which a *coda* of ineffable inanity has been added. May I remind Mr. Zacherewitsch of the remarks by Rimsky-Korsakoff (printed at the beginning of *Le Coq d'Or*) which I had occasion to quote in THE GRAMOPHONE a month or two ago aenent the performance of another violinist: "The composer desires that the singers in all his works keep strictly to the music written for them." And the *Hymn to the Sun* is written as a song!

London Wind Quintette with Piano.—It would be difficult to get together a stronger team of wind players than have been assembled for this work. Each one of them is a *virtuoso* on his instrument, and the playing all through is of a standard that is rarely found. If one wishes to know how well wind instruments can play solos, or how beautifully they can blend together, one cannot do better than buy the record. The standard of the performance and the success of the reproduction can be gauged by the fact that never once does one weary of the sound of the instruments in this four-movement work, although the monotony that is the usual result of long passages for wind is notorious. Unfortunately the music itself, though quite well written for the instruments, is of appalling dullness. I have done my best to discover interesting things and I find, for example, that I have made a note of the horn solo at the beginning of the slow movement. But even here it is the playing rather than the music that strikes one. The third movement is the best; a pleasant tune in an attractive rhythm, with some good effects of instrumentation and lyrical counterpoint. But throughout the rest of the work the subjects are so lacking in distinction, the treatment is so conventional, that it is impossible to keep one's mind from wandering. True I had no score (there is none published, I believe), but music is made to be heard and not seen. Schubert was able, with roughly the same harmonic vocabulary, to produce lovely music, but Schubert could write real tunes, and the idiom in his days was fresh and vital. This work fails because it is impossible for a composer to put the clock back fifty or a hundred years.

Donarelli.—Donarelli's singing is a little disappointing here. He has a good voice and a real dramatic sense, but, especially in the *Aria della Rosa*, there is a curious spasmodic effect, due, apparently, to a failure in breath control. Perhaps he was nervous! The company's bulletin explains the music (both songs are uncut), but I cannot let the remark that Berlioz is "generally voted poor as a composer" pass without qualification. It may be that the music of this great Frenchman, this romantic of the romantics, fails sometimes to appeal to our disillusioned present-day audiences. But when one thinks of his orchestral and harmonic innovations, the beauty and originality of his melodies, and the vividness of his imagination, it is impossible to deny his genius. It would need a long article to establish these points, but at least I can make an emphatic assertion of them.

Norman Williams.—If only all singers would learn to pronounce their words like this! Norman Williams has a bass voice of good quality, but in the Verdi song he certainly could not stand the inevitable comparison with the magnificent Pinza record on the strength of this alone. His diction, however, is a tremendous asset, and while I prefer Pinza's voice I am glad to have the Williams version to elucidate the text for me when the score is not handy. I fancy, by the way, that the singer will show us that he can do even better than he has here. The *Il Seraglio* song is most welcome; we still have far too little in the way of Mozart songs on the gramophone. This clear rendering in English makes me feel more strongly than ever the affinity that exists between some of Mozart's operatic music and parts of the Gilbert and Sullivan operas. The two composers are separated by a century, and, of course, Mozart is the greater of the two, but the resemblance is there all the same. Compare this song with *Take a pair of sparkling eyes*. The differences are obvious, but so, surely, are the similarities. Incidentally the song is sung in English and the title of the opera printed in Italian. The work was in fact written in German.

Makushina.—I am a great admirer of Madame Makushina's voice, and I don't think I have ever heard it to better advantage than in this simple but intensely expressive Gretchaninoff song. If there is a finer Russian song-writer than Gretchaninoff I don't know him. The Rimsky-Korsakoff song is less successful; the

music is divided so emphatically into two parts that the unity of the whole is lost. Madame Makushina is good in the first part (though not so good as in the other song), but I don't feel the stormy section suits her. For further details of the music I refer readers to the bulletin.

Fusati.—All the Velvet Face records I have heard this month have good surfaces, but here there is such peculiar excellence that I must draw special attention to it. The recording, too, is most satisfactory, the orchestra coming out with unusual clearness. *Fusati*'s singing pleases me much more than it did in his last issues; the *Rigoletto* song, indeed, seems to be exactly right, and if in the Puccini he seems to show an affection for his high notes that may grate a little on some English ears, it is only fair to remember that it is not a crime for an Italian singer to sing Italian music in the Italian manner, especially when, as here, the high notes in question are really beautiful.

P. P.

HIS MASTER'S VOICE.

(December Issues.)

For details see opposite page.

The illustrious quartet of singers who head this list all seem to me to fail in one important respect: they sing at full blast throughout their songs, paying very slight attention to light and shade. There may be, probably are, people who like this continuous full organ effect, but the majority, surely, prefer a greater range of tone-colour. These singers would never use their voices on the stage for long in this manner; why do they consider it to be necessary on a gramophone record? With this qualification one can unfeignedly admire the tremendous volume of Chaliapine's voice; he gives the right sardonic quality to Mephistopheles' *Serenade*—inferior to Berlioz's setting but one of the best things in *Faust*—and his laughter is excellently demoniacal. The song in praise of Mammon is hurled at us with terrific power; the chorus participate in the affray. Ansseau is the worst offender in the matter of tone-quality; indeed, he scarcely ever sings below double fortissimo! Yet his voice is of beautiful quality. The raias from *Lohengrin* are rather dull apart from their context.

Caruso's record is a great improvement on the last; the Spanish song is really fascinating though possibly not quite so humorous as it sounds! His diction and sense of rhythm are a joy; the Neapolitan song is quite pretty in a Puccinesque way.

I think Battistini's *Eri tu che macchiavi* is an old record; certainly it is one of his best and the best of this particular aria. The second is from an unfamiliar opera of Verdi's in which the "force of destiny" is so strong that not a single character remains alive in the last act to carry on the plot. The chorus alone survive; but how lost is an operatic chorus without its principals! The music is dramatic in Verdi's middle-period style.

Mme. Suggia has chosen exceptionally futile music which, with the exception of rather faulty intonation at the beginning of the *Humoresque*, she plays beautifully, but not so beautifully as to disguise the poverty-stricken state of these works. It is true that good 'cello solos are hard to come by, but some do exist, and I implore Mme. Suggia to give us something worth while in her own inimitable way.

Renée Chemet's record is perfectly charming; the playing is by turns fine, virile, and graceful; the recording, too, is excellent. One may have to complain of the music on H.M.V. records sometimes, but rarely of the recording.

Tudor Davies uses his voice with real intelligence in these two Weber arias. It remains for an English singer to show the European artists how to make a good, interesting, record. Those who know only the *Overture to Freischütz* will recognise a passage from this towards the close of *Through the Forest*. It, and the other side also, is what was called a "scena" in opposition to the more formal type of aria prevailing in the older operas. The composer was free to introduce quick or slow, lyrical or dramatic sections by way of contrast, and was under no obligation to return to his first tune. The orchestral parts are excellent.

Florence Austral fails to secure the mystical atmosphere that should inform the cantabile section of *Senta's Ballad*; the chorus part, too, is missing—a serious default. Her singing, however, is dramatic and beautiful; this side makes interesting contrast with the Parlophone issue. I fancy most people will prefer the latter.

The air from *Cavalleria* is chiefly remarkable for the singer's lovely low notes, which appear to have gained much in quality. Altogether a good record. Congratulations to Leila Megane on achieving a real mezza-voce in *'Twas in the merry month of May*; it would please even Mr. Plunkett Greene! She has a beautiful voice. Frank Bridge's *Isobel*, a good song, is more suited to a baritone voice. The piano accompaniment is much too faint in both songs.

To play Borwick's arrangement of Debussy's *L'après midi d'un faune* is a *tour de force* but nothing more; child's play, no doubt, to Mark Hambourg. He takes all kinds of liberties with the rhythm—listen to the *accelerando* in the opening phrase—and what emerges in this interpretation is far removed from Debussy's bath of sensuous, languid sound. Moreover, the music depends almost entirely on its orchestration. The recording is quite good. Offenbach's gay strains are always welcome and are well played by De Groot and his band. I think it is time Mr. Ketelbey stopped ringing those "monastery" bells; even across a meadow they are painfully commonplace. Howard Carr knows how to score light music with consummate effect; this is a pleasant little piece of his.

It is a thousand pities Peter Dawson wastes his fine voice on such poor material as this; the "curtain falls" indeed, but rises to disclose always the same scene. The two humorous records will be preferable to uncle's stories at the Christmas dinner. It was all I could do not to dance a fling to the bagpipes; these, too, will enliven the family circle.

N.P.

PARLOPHONE

E.10198 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Edith Lorand Orchestra: *The Sanctuary of the Heart* and *In a Chinese Temple Garden* (A. W. Ketelby).

E.10202 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Edith Lorand Trio: *Londonderry Air* and *Menuett in G major* (violin solo) (Beethoven).

E.10197 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra: *O Katharina* and *The Football Walk*, fox-trots.

E.10201 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Marek Weber and his Famous Orchestra: *Hawaiian Memories* and *L'Etrange*, waltzes.

E.10205 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Emmy Heckmann-Bettendorf (soprano): *Caro mio ben* (Giordani) and *Ave Maria* (Schubert). With harp and Mustel organ acc.

E.10206 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Antonio Cortis (tenor): *Forse la soglia* and *Ma se m'e forza perderti*, Finale from Act III, *Ballo in Maschera* (Verdi).

E.10203 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—John Perry (tenor): *The Holy City* and *The Star of Bethlehem* (Adams).

E.10204 (12in., 4s. 6d.).—Robert Howe (baritone): *Nazareth* (Gounod) and Jessie Broughton (contralto): *Abide with me* (Liddle).

Edith Lorand.—The first of these pieces is what Kai-Lung would call "gravity-removing"; Mr. Ketelby's idea of China is as remarkable as his monastic impressions. But both pieces are excellent restaurant music, better played than they deserve, served up with *sauce piquante* in the form of a humming chorus, gongs, cymbals, and a fruity contralto voice. The favourite *Minuet in G* and *Londonderry Air* make a record that is bound to be very popular.

There is something extraordinarily pleasing about Marek Weber's orchestra; a lilt, a vital sense of rhythm, an abandonment to the music. *Hawaiian Memories* is a delicious record.

All the old "religious" war-horses are trotted out for Christmas. Their interpreters know just what is required of them and fulfil their functions admirably. It seems sad that people prefer this sickly stuff to the many fine old English carols they should be singing themselves.

I am sorry Mme. Bettendorf permitted a harp and Mustel organ accompaniment to these two songs. The harp is tolerable and not unsuited to the Schubert song; but an American organ is always terrible, doubly so on a gramophone. This apart, Mme. Bettendorf's singing is beautiful and full of intelligence. A fine recitative and aria from Verdi's *Masted Ball*. How sure the composer's touch is! He passes easily from declamation to lyricism, making his points with conviction but without undue stress. Mr. Cortis gives a rather strident but impassioned rendering of the anguished Earl of Warwick.

P.



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K.05118 (12in., 4s. 6d.)—**Jelly d'Aranyi** (violin): *Spinnlied* (Dienzi) and *Romance* (Joachim).

X.9480 (10in., 3s.)—**Paul Kochanski** (violin): *Chant sans Paroles, Op. 2, No. 3* (Tchaikovsky) and *Melodie, Op. 42, No. 3* (Tchaikovsky).

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K.05121 (12in., 4s. 6d.)—**Band of H.M. Life Guards**: *Easter Hymn* from *Cavalleria Rusticana* (Mascagni) and *Grand March* from *Tannhäuser* (Wagner).

This is a pleasanter record of Tokatyan than others of his I have heard, but the quality of his voice does not appeal to me greatly; quite good interpretations and accompaniments, however. The Gerhardt record is a perfect joy. No one can sing a "turn" as she can in the *Sapphische Ode* (and *Feldeinsamkeit*), no one can, in anything like the same degree, interest us in a song from start to finish. *An die Musik* (To Music) is one of Schubert's songs that is flawlessly beautiful; so also is her singing of it. It is sufficient to say that the accompanist is Harold Craxton. I only hope there are still many Gerhardt records to come. Horace Stevens has an excellent ringing voice and gives a good account of the *Prologue to Pagliacci* and *I'm a roamer*. What a flagrant crib of Mendelssohn's song *The Floral Dance* is, by the way! This singer's diction is exemplary. Mr. Titterton shows aspiring vocalists just how not to say Quilter's charming "To Daisies." He slops his voice all over the phrases and frequently makes nonsense of the words, though Quilter is partially to blame. The first phrase, musically, reads: "Shut not so soon the dull-eyed night has not as yet begun"; it has therefore to be broken at the word "soon" in order to make sense. The singer is more at home in Eric Coates's sentimental ditty. His voice is decidedly pleasant. The two final movements of the viola adaptation of Brahms' *Clarinet Sonata* are rather disappointing. The scherzo hardly offers enough contrast to the rich beauty of the slow movement, and the *Finale* is conventional. The playing of both artists is on the same high level as before. Jelly d'Aranyi's pious choice of Joachim's *Romance* hardly justifies the dullness of the music; *Spinnlied*'s musical value, also, is exiguous. But nothing can dull the beauty of tone and phrasing of this player. I wish she would record a modern or classical violin and piano sonata.

Except for a slight weakness in the string department, this is a good rendering of Rossini's delightful overture. His orchestration is still very effective and the "tum-tum" bass positively refreshing! Of course, the famous crescendo appears; the first time it is checked, the second it sweeps victoriously to the end (Part II). May Peterson has a nice voice which is wasted on a sickly perversion of Burns' beautiful words, and a prima donna's idea of *Robin Adair*. Ethel Hook's first-rate diction is a tribute to the value of music hall experience. Her voice is, to me, far nicer than sister Clara's because it is a perfectly normal organ! Kochanski's playing is musically. Somehow Tchaikovsky's *Chant sans paroles* is always delightful to listen to, but his *Melodie* is extremely fussy.

N. P.

THE VATICAN CHOIR.

PARLOPHONE.—R.20000 (12in., 7s. 6d.)—*Innocentes* (Luca Marenzio, 1550-1599) and *Ave Maria* (da Vittoria, 1545-1611). R.20001 (12in., 7s. 6d.)—*Laudate Dominum* and *Exsultate Deo* (Palestrina, 1525-1594).

Sung by the *Sistine Vatican Choir*.

So little of the sixteenth century Italian choral music has been recorded that these records should be sure of their welcome in any case. I have only had an opportunity of hearing them once, and that without knowing from what works they come, and therefore without a score. Nor do I profess to be a specialist on this choral art. Perhaps the chief impression that I gained was of the variety between these three composers of approximately the same period. On the whole the Marenzio piece, with its atmosphere of simple devotion, seemed to me the most attractive. But the fervour of the opening of the *Ave Maria* (Vittoria) and the dignified elation of the two Palestrina items are also most striking. I did not have the pleasure of hearing the *Sistine Choir* when they were over in England, so that I was particularly interested in the records. A comparison with the H.M.V. selection from Byrd's *Great Service* is almost inevitable, though we must remember that the Byrd music was performed by the English Singers, a picked body of soloists, whereas here we have a large choir. The Byrd records, therefore, naturally gain in clearness, but in volume of tone they cannot compare with these. I am not sure that I should not have preferred a rather more austere rendering of this beautiful but controlled music. But there is no denying that the dramatic dynamic contrasts of the choir are exceedingly effective—and how wonderful is their *pianissimo*!

P. P.

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3496.—*Wait a bit, Susie*, and *Naughty Baby*.

Miscellaneous Reviews

Apart from the Mozart *Violin Concerto*, reviewed elsewhere, the Columbia bulletin for December contains only the lighter forms of music and what is called Christmas music. The Court Symphony Orchestra scores another success with a *Patience Selection* (997, 4s. 6d.), which makes the eighth Gilbert and Sullivan selection recorded by this orchestra under Mr. Albert Ketelbey. All eight can be bought in an album for 36s., an admirable Christmas present among Savoyards. I did not enjoy the *Punch and Judy* Ballet from *The Punch Bowl* (also played by them and conducted by the composer, Mr. Norman O'Neill) quite so much; but perhaps that is only because the music is not as familiar to me. Then there are no less than seven records from *Primrose*, the Gershwin music at the Winter Garden Theatre, done by the original cast (9001-9007, 4s. 6d. each). I believe they are the first records out of this revue, and I know that the Columbia dance record of *Wait a bit, Susie*, was the first out. Personally, I was bored by the play when I saw it, and was honestly surprised to find that I enjoyed listening to these records of Leslie Henson and Claude Hulbert, and to be reminded of "The Mophams" and "Mary, Queen of Scots."

There's a charming Melville Gideon record (3509, 3s.) of *Leave a lot of time for love* and *Crinoline gown* from "The Co-Optimists." Those who love his records must add this to the collection.

The Century Quartette's second record of *Nursery Rhymes* (3501, 3s.; the former one was 3331) is full of good things very clearly and briskly sung; and these two records, with Compton Mackenzie's *Santa Claus in Summer*, make an excellent present for any child of 7 to 12. I needn't mention the new *Meanderings of Monty* (3504, 3s.) or Vivian Foster's talking record (3505, 3s.), which have both been singled out for praise by the Editor.

The "Street Singer" seems to have lost none of its popularity at the Lyric, and more records of the music—this month from the Vocalion Co.—are bound to be welcome. Apart from a selection (K.05120, 4s. 6d.), played by the Revue Orchestra, there are *Heart's Desire* and *Follow Yvette*, sung by Gladys Moncrieff, whose voice, on the whole, records better than Miss Phyllis Dare's. This is X.9478 (3s.), and I prefer it to Miss Moncrieff's 12in. record of *Love me now and—with Frank Titterton—By the light of the Moon* (K.05116, 4s. 6d.) from *Madame Pompadour*. Of the November Aco four-shilling records I can't help enjoying what is called a "Grand Fantasia," *Eight Minutes with Richard Wagner*, played by the Australian Newcastle Steelworks Band, though I have a suspicion that the true Wagnerian would jib at it (F.33059). The always good Grosvenor Orchestra make a rather dull record (F.33065) of the *Shepherd's Dance* from *Henry VIII* and of *Musica Proibita*; and Stephen Langley sings two ballads (F.33064) with his usual accomplishment.

By the way Zonophone now produces Sir Harry Lauder's record of *Love makes the world a merry-go-round* and *I'm looking for a bonnie lass to love me as G.O.62* at 4s., but I don't think either of the songs is as good a version as that adopted for the H.M.V. 12in. record last month (D.198, 6s. 6d.). In fact, I suppose the Zono is a rejected H.M.V. in this case.

There are some rather interesting records, also Zonophones, of what band-lovers call descriptive items: 2452, *Sailor's Life*, played by the St. Hilda Colliery Band, and 2474, *Rural Wedding*, played by the Horwich R.M.I. Band. These pieces were, of course, played by the massed bands at the Crystal Palace not long ago, and are familiar wherever band contests are held. The same composer is responsible for the well-known Zono 2057, which contains the *Mill in the Dale* and the *Forge in the Forest*, recorded by the St. Hilda Colliery Band, the Crystal Palace champions for four years. The interest, as far as I am concerned, is that the composer is a friend of mine, and a contributor to this magazine. But, apart from my prejudices, I believe that the records will please—will—er—give satisfaction to all who—well, anyhow, you know what I mean!

* * *

PEPPERING.

Notice.—There is every prospect that the January bulletins will contain a far larger quantity of important records than usual, and as Christmas will make the time at the disposal of reviewers even shorter than this month, it may be necessary to postpone analytical notes till February, when the Editor's Quarterly Review is also due to appear. But the next number will contain an analysis of the *Pathetic Symphony* and a comparison of the recorded versions of it; a special article on the records of the Hallé Orchestra; and an article by Mr. Harry Melville on the Dance Records of 1924.

Notes and Acknowledgments

(continued from p. 256)

We have received a note from Mr. Wilensky to say that his new XYLOPIN needle will not be on the market before the middle of December. In the meantime we have submitted a very few samples to an expert, who reports that "the volume and body are excellent, about equal to a short fibre, and they give excellent detail of orchestral pieces. They are also extremely quiet in running, and scratch is practically eliminated." He tried the experiment of "doping" them and found that in Galli-Curci's *Come per me sereno* it gave "about the best reproduction I have ever obtained of it throughout"; and it "played four sides of the latest Brahms symphony without much deterioration and gave a fuller tone with better definition than a doped fibre." So far so good. It remains to be seen whether this opinion will be confirmed by others.

In the meanwhile the persistence of our readers has persuaded Mr. W. S. Wild to make a "semi-permanent" fibre, and we hear marvellous reports of it. Perhaps the Editor—who has forsaken fibres and returned to steel needles—will be tempted to re-enter the fray and turn his coat.

* * *

Congratulations to the HOUSE OF IMHOF on securing the first prize in the H.M.V. window-dressing competition. It is one of the cheeriest and most efficient "salons" in London, and the window is always worth looking at, as it generally contains a row of copies of THE GRAMOPHONE.

* * *

Mr. Frederick Jackson, whose little advertisements of his JUSSERTE cabinet betray every month an active mind, has sent us the following "Humorosities, Curiosities, and Monstrosities," for which we must find room.

"Oh!" said the lady, entering "The Salon" in a frightful hurry, "I want some 'Sympathy' needles please. You know. Those which prick both ends!"

"Ours is such a lovely machine," gushed Miss Inno Cence. "It's a Trafophone; in fact, it's so beautiful that people think we've got a wireless set!"

Mrs. Uppies Nobbe swept into the store: "Er! I want 'The Kitten on the Keys.' I would prefer it played by Pachmann if you have it!"

A gramomaniac who loved his records of the Grenadiers listened rapturously to a rendering of a bagpipe and drum band record right through to the end, and then exclaimed: "Beautiful! Lovely! But I wish it had been recorded by the Grenadier Guards."

"Oh, yes, I've heard about those," quoth he, eyeing a V.F. catalogue, "But surely they won't last with a velvet surface."

"Curiously Teutonic," snapped Colonel Soundwaft, when he couldn't get the needle to budge from its grip.

"Track alignment perfect," muttered the midnight folly, as he got his key in the latch first shot.

"It's a lot of money," he groused monthly as he forks out his "bob," "But I can't afford it next time."

* * *

Goeta Ljungberg, who paid too short a visit to Covent Garden last season but left the *Salomé* records behind to console us, has just scored a new triumph at the Royal Opera, Stockholm, in an opera by Baron Frederic D'Erlanger, called *Noel*. Shall we hear it in London, if there is ever another season at Covent Garden?

* * *

The promised French series of H.M.V. records is apparently not yet available; but when readers ask for advice about language records we always advise them to find out about, and if possible try the various series, with booklets, issued by the Linguaphone Institute. As mentioned in an earlier number, the surface of the records was not first-class, but the diction and accent of the speaker are, and at least one member of the staff has derived real advantage from the French series and is now applying for leave to go to Paris.

We now learn that the surface has been greatly improved.

* * *

Hospital Records.—So many applications were made for packets of surplus records to be sent to hospitals and institutions, that there is still a long waiting list. The Secretary of the British Red Cross Society, 19, Berkeley Street, London, W. 1, has sent us a letter of thanks from the Medical Superintendent of the Ewell Ministry of Pensions Hospital on behalf of the patients: ". . . their great appreciation of the gifts of gramophone records received from THE GRAMOPHONE and its readers."

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From One till Two (Bard and Hoover).
Sung by Ray Lennard, with Orchestral Accomp.

1353 Oh! Sarah! Won't You Please Pull Down that Blind? (C. Gaskill)
Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.

1352 Why does a Chicken Cross the Road? (Paul Andrew). Comedy Song.
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.

1351 I Wonder what's become of Sally? (Milton Ager). Ballad.
Sung by Chas. Bonheur and Joe Price, with Orchestral Accomp.

1350 Why did you Call Me "Wonderful One"? (Vincent and Herbert).
Sung by Geo. Berry, with Orchestral Accomp.

1351 It's a Man every time, It's a Man (Dulbin, McHugh and Dash).
Sung by Joe Price, with Orchestral Accomp.

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Shepherd's Dance, No. 2 (Three dances from "Henry VIII").
(German). Played by the Newcastle Steel Works Band (Australia's
Premier Band) (Conductor, Mr. A. H. Baile).
Three Dances from "Henry VIII". (Torch Dance, No. 3) (German).
Played by the Newcastle Steel Works Band (Australia's
Premier Band) (Conductor, Mr. A. H. Baile).
The Wee Grenadier (Theodore Graham). Played by the Crystal Palace Band.

Hawaiian Guitars

1347 Ben Bolt (N. Knaess and English). Hawaiian Quartette.
Silver Threads among the Gold (Rexford and Danks). Hawaiian
Quartette. By Ferera's Hawaiian Serenaders.

By Ferera's Hawaiian Serenaders.

Dances

1346 Welsh Medley (Henry Geehl). One Step.
Irish Medley (Henry Geehl). One Step.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
It Ain't Gonna Rain No Mo' (Wendall Hall). Fox Trot.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
I'm Gonna Bring a Watermelon (Con Conrad). Fox Trot.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
How's Your Poor Old Feet? (Pattison and Talmadge). Fox Trot.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
Virginia (G. Gershwin). Fox Trot.
Played by Greening's Dance Orchestra.
Any Way the Wind Blows (F. J. Hanley). Fox Trot.
Played by Lanin and his Orchestra.
Spain (Isham Jones). Tango Fox Trot.
Played by Imperial Dance Orchestra.
That's Georgia (Little, Gillespie and Shay). Fox Trot.
Played by Roseland Dance Orchestra.
1342 Sally Lou (Hugo Frey). Fox Trot.
Played by Hollywood Dance Orchestra.



THE NEW-POOR PAGE

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REGAL records, thanks to the courtesy of Messrs. The Johnston Talking-Machine Co., Ltd., have afforded me an exceedingly pleasant two days' work in sampling (I could do no more) the more important of the many sections of the list. The surface of these records is delightful when new and not one of those I tried had to be rejected for bad centring. This is praise I cannot give to any other cheap record. The recording is remarkably pure and free from harshness in all the MILITARY BAND sections. I prefer the tone-quality of the Regal Military Band as being the nearest to the Grenadier Guards (Columbia) standard of purity—*Faust Ballet Music* (two discs), *Valse Novembre*. King's Military Band is harder in tone, but the bass is very good—Ich Dien. Palace Guards Band has the best military band record of *Ballet Egyptien* (two discs) I have yet heard. Silver Stars Band has a perfect record of *Præcludium* (Jarnfeldt). The Welsh Guards have a real soldier's number in *Trooping the Colours*. The Scots Guards are quite at their best in *Lynwood March*. The BRASS BAND recording is light, clean, and shows variations in tone-volume particularly well, but as this is not a popular section, I will only mention *The Viking* (two discs), which a lover of brass band music might very well use for the purpose of enthusing those who do not care for it. The orchestral recording is light in character, but very clean, and is most successful in the case of the small Regal Orchestra—*Valse Bluette*, *Valse Triste*, *Over the Waves Waltz*. I played the Empire Symphony Orchestra's record, *Blue Bird Dances* (O'Niel) (two discs), right through. The Regal Dance Band have a useful *Students Lancers* on two discs and a nice rendering of *Kiss in the Dark* waltz. Of the light OPERATIC SELECTIONS, *Sybil* (Regal Military Band) and *Lilac Time* (Silver Stars Band) are good, but I like the orchestral rendering of *Catherine* better. ORGAN: Ketelby's records seem to be played on a very small organ, but with the exception of the real grand organ record of Bach's *Fugue* (Columbia) they are the best organ records I know—*Pilgrim's Chorus* (Tannhäuser). I wonder there are not more PIANOFORTE records on the list, the recording of all of them is well up to the average and they are so uniform—*Aisha* (Lindsay), *Electric Girl Fox-trot*. Sergeant Leggatt's CORNET SOLOS cannot be beaten—*Sweetest Flower that blows*, Gounod's *Serenade*. The FLUTE AND PICCOLO recordings now take first place among my demonstration records for fullness and correctness of tone-quality—*Saltarello* (German). There are few VIOLIN solos, and the recording is unequal, but *Hungarian Dances* and *If you have loved me* are exceptionally good, and so also are the humorous fiddle records, *The Drunken Piper* and *Fiddle Fun*.

The quality of the vocal recording surprises me; in not one of the records I tried was the enunciation faulty. So far as I can judge one might order any one of the vocal solos (I do not include all the trios and quartettes) in full expectation of getting a correctly centred record sung by a singer careful to pronounce every word clearly. Even the SOPRANO records are satisfactory. I will mention the operatic extracts of Barbara Knowles' *Jewel Song* and Violet Essex' *Il Bacio*. Of songs well sung by sopranos and well recorded there are quite a few, *I hid my Love, Love is meant to make us glad*, *The valley of Laughter*. The CONTRALTO records have rather a mezzo-soprano character, *Violets, By the Fountain*, but they do not hoot. The TENOR records are best in songs of a very straightforward character, for the recording does not favour the mezza-voce or the falsetto production. William Thomas is good in a robust rendering in English of *La Donna è mobile*. Of the song records I prefer those by Eric Randolph—*Once again*, *The Song of the Wild*. Ernest Pike is well represented by *For you alone* and *The English Rose*. William Thomas is rather robust in *Smilin' Through* and *My Dreams*. In the BARITONE AND BASS records one does not miss the closed production of tone in many of the songs—*Kashmiri Song*, *Glorious Devon*, *Blow, blow, thou winter wind*, *Widdicombe Fair*, and last and best Thorpe Bates in *Land of the Long Ago* and *The Devout Lover*.

NOVEMBER ISSUES.

ACO.—A particularly good selection of vocal records this month. MEZZO-SOPRANO: Miss Virginia Perry at her best, *Arise, O Sun*. TENOR: *Passing by*. BARITONE: Billy Desmond is always good, and *In Between the Showers* he shows, as in all his other numbers, how a popular song should be sung. 'CELLO: *Lullaby*. ORCHESTRAL: *Rosamunde Overture*. All lovers of John Ireland's music will welcome the excellently recorded PIANOFORTE record, *The Island Spell*.

BELTONA.—A great improvement in PIANOFORTE recording is shown in *Fantaisie Tarantelle*. TENOR: *Mary*. VIOLIN: *Swing Song*. A particularly good MILITARY BAND number, *Welsh Patrol*, also two very good French band marches, *Le Rêve Passé*. INSTRUMENTAL TRIO: Gounod's *Serenade*.

IMPERIAL.—A nice record of the little RADIO SONG, *Dream Daddy*. FOX-TROT: *How's your poor old feet?* At the risk of being condemned for repeating myself I will again call attention to the perfect record by the BARITONE of the Monte Carlo Opera House, *Noël Pâien*, a record, sung in French, that in my opinion should be in every collection of high-class music where price is a factor.

WINNER.—Two fine Spanish dances on one disc, brilliantly played and perfectly recorded, *La mujer del costeno* and *La Casita*.

ZONO.—A further example of the perfectly recorded CHURCH CHOIR records, *Holy Father cheer our way*. A good TENOR record of popular songs, *Golden West*.

N.B.—I have purposely refrained from giving catalogue information because I wish readers to get the lists containing any numbers they fancy from their dealers, and then if they do not like the pair on the record I have mentioned they may be tempted to try another record of the same series.

Everyone should remember that machines having small horns (resonators) will not respond fully to the tone of instruments having large resonators or large resonating columns of air.

H.T.B.



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BY

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NOTES AND QUERIES

[Each comment, question, or answer should be written clearly on a separate slip of paper and addressed to THE GRAMOPHONE, 58, Frith Street, W. 1, as early as possible in the month. Full name and address must in all cases be given, for reference.]

(192) **Appreciation.**—I should very much like to express how very grateful I am to THE GRAMOPHONE for continually urging and encouraging the recording companies to provide us with the greatest music, and also to the companies for responding in such an admirable manner. To be able to hear such works as the "C sharp minor Quartet, Op. 131" and the "Ninth Symphony" at a moment's notice is the realisation of what may have been considered a few years ago as the wildest of ideas.—F. N., Shelton.

(193) **Gershwin's Rhapsody in Blue.**—I was sorry that your November reviews did not include this record. H.M.V. C.1171. Personally I consider it easily the most interesting issue of the month, and have recommended it to all the gramophiles of my acquaintance. To all who admire Bliss, Coosens, or Prokofiev it should prove a welcome addition to the still rather restricted list of modernities for the gramophone.—G. T. L., W. 4.

[N. P.'s note on this record, H.M.V. C.1171, was as follows:—"This is almost a new art-form. Stravinsky and some of the French 'six' have attempted something of the kind; but their compositions are far too self-conscious to be successful, and their knowledge of the peculiar kind of scoring needed is inadequate. The medium is of far greater interest than Mr. Gershwin's music which is extremely derivative. Rimsky-Korsakoff is drawn upon in the opening section, Debussy and Grieg towards the end. There are also many pure *ad captandum* effects. But something undoubtedly individual emerges. The composer plays the piano brilliantly; the whole thing has the air of an improvisation, and I should be surprised to hear that the piano part has ever been written down. I cannot help feeling that the saxophone and trumpet are frequently abused by those hyena-like yells on the former and overblown effects on the latter. The saxophones would prove useful as ordinary members of the orchestra. The tenor instrument is very similar in tone to a clarinet, only more supple; the baritone to a 'cello, but fuller and rounder. However, the orchestra of the future will perhaps be no settled body. Instead, we shall have chamber orchestras of varying content. This example may well be a portent. It is well recorded and of peculiar interest."]

(194) **French H.M.V. Records.**—During a recent visit to Paris I secured a number of these records, including some fine Russian choral music by a Cossack choir. They are practically the same thing as those concerted numbers done by the "Chauve-Souris" and "Moscow Blue Bird" companies here—very well sung, and, of course, quite out of the ordinary run of records... The H.M.V. Co. here can get them to order, and I believe they would work out at about 4s. each. The numbers are K.2425, K.2429, and K.2464. Other French H.M.V. issues worth having are Nos. P.308, W.164, U.46 and Y.52 from "Louise," sung by Payan, Marcellin, and Brohly; most of Reynaldo Hahn's recordings of his own compositions; a 12in. disc of a march from Debussy's "Enfant Prodigue"; and Ravel's "Pavane pour une Enfante défunte" (W.356).—G. T. L., W. 4.

(195) **Frieda Hempel, "Wohin" and "Ungeduld."**—Re my note to you regarding H.M.V. records to be withdrawn. This record is already taken off in consequence, the Gramophone Co. state, of the original matrix having broken down.—J. H. B., Edinburgh.

(196) **Bettendorf on Homochord.**—I should like to bring to the notice of your readers a Homochord record (P.5004) of two songs by Grieg ("The Swan" and "I love you") charmingly sung in German by Emmy Bettendorf (*sic* on label) with a sympathetic instrumental accompaniment. The price is 4s. 6d. Re an Elgar Symphony, Mr. Robey may be glad to know that one of them may be expected from H.M.V. in the near future.—J. T. F., S.W.

(197) **Didur.**—I wonder if any of your readers have any records of Adamo Didur, other than Fonotipia. I tried to get one of his Fonotipia records, but was informed that they are now unobtainable. I believe he does record for other companies, but I do not know what companies or where to procure the records; I would therefore be pleased with information.—A. M. G. B., Knebworth.

[See Mr. Herman Klein on page 7 of Vol. 2, June, reviewing an Actuelle record of Didur's.—Ed.]

(198) **Aida.**—What is the best recording of the Triumphal March from "Aida" (Act. II)? Is the Columbia record (L.1439) of a selection from the opera a good one?—W. J. S., Wall Heath.

(199) **Waldstein Sonata.**—Can you tell me if any record can be obtained of Beethoven's "Waldstein Sonata"?—M. A. S., Bishopstoke.

(200) **Records Wanted.**—Can you inform if these two compositions of Josef Holbrooke—"The Raven" and "The Bells" symphonies—are recorded, preferably on Zonophone or Winner records?—J. S. H., Bradford.

[Visionary, please repeat this query in a year's time!—Ed.]

(201) **Best Versions wanted.**—Perhaps some of your readers can enlighten me as to worthy renderings of the following: (1) "Unfinished Symphony" (Schubert); (2) Rubinstein's "Melody in F"; (3) "Last Rose of Summer"; (4) "Ave Maria" (Gounod and Schubert); (5) "Humoresque" (Dvorak).—W. J. H., Old Hall.

(202) **Best Records wanted.**—(i) "Chu Chin Chow," (ii) the "Habanera" and "Seguidille" from "Carmen," (iii) Wagner's "Siegfried Idyll."—H. J. C., West Bromwich.

(203) **Best Records wanted.**—Which are the best records of Destinnova and of Hempel?—W. J. H., Old Hall.



ANSWERS TO QUERIES

[Will readers please notice particularly that answers should be written on separate slips?—Ed.]

(160) **Musica Records.**—I would like to add a word of high praise for the fine Mozart issues of many numbers from the various operas which are unobtainable here. I have some of Elisabeth Schumann's, Katherine Arkandy's, Friedrich Schorr's, Emmy Bettendorf's, etc., also some Polyphon records—a subsidiary Musica Co.—likewise of Mozart music. Both these catalogues contain a whole lot of operetta music unknown here and all very interesting to those who like their Lehar, Fall, Eyssler, etc.—G. T. L., W. 4.

(168) **Elwes' Records.**—In my opinion he is better in lyrical songs—e.g., "Now sleep the crimson petal" (Col. L.1055), "So we'll go no more a-roving" (H.M.V. C.459), "Phyllis hath such charming graces" (H.M.V. B.320), "To Daisies" (H.M.V. B.321); and perhaps "Love went a-riding" (Col. L.1325). He seems harsh in louder songs.—H. J. C., West Bromwich.

Col. L.1398, "Sea Dirge" and "Lake of Innisfree," should not be omitted from any collection of records.—J. H. B., Edinburgh.

All Elwes' Columbia records are good, and it is only one's preference in the matter of the songs that can guide one's choice. There are three 10in. plum label (H.M.V.) records by Elwes still in the catalogue, but they are not as good as the Columbias.—J. T. F., S.W.12.

(180) **Frank Bridge, "Go not, happy day."**—This song appears in Columbia and Vocalion lists—viz., D.1431 by Eisdell, and X.9195 by Titterton.—J. H. B., Edinburgh, and others.

[The Carmen Hill version has been withdrawn from the H.M.V. catalogue.—Ed.]

(182) **Sympathetic Chromic, etc., Needles.**—Wear on needles differs with nature of records. I keep a good magnifying glass (part of a good microscope) by me and watch the needle wear. This also gives warning of bad needle track, which wears a shoulder on needle. The microscopic examination is very instructive.—A. H. B., Oldhill.

(184) **Best Version Wanted.**—Far and away the best record of César Franck's "Sonata in A" is Col. L.1149, re-recorded by Messrs. Catterall and Murdoch, first and second movements. I have a letter from Messrs. Columbia stating that parts 3 and 4 have now been completed and will be issued in due course. We should like Grieg's Op. 45 also ditto.—E. S. G., Bristol.

The best records of the Franck "Sonata in A major" are the Vocalions by Phyllis Allan and Mrs. Hobday (D.02042 and D.02093), 4s. 6d. each.—J. T. F., S.W. 12.

(187) **Record Wanted.**—It may help you in your quest to know that the correct title of the song in question is "Italiano dalinga," and is still obtainable, I believe, from collectors, though I know of no record of it. Even if one exists it were better to leave it in obscurity, since any comic element the song may possess is obtained chiefly at the expense of good taste.—F. W. N., Godalming.

Gramophone Societies' Reports

[These reports are becoming formidable. Will Recording Secretaries please note the shorter the report the more likely it is to be printed, and that programmes MUST be written out ready for the printer unless the items are already incorporated in the report. Liverpool and Glasgow may be taken as examples to others.—ED.]

THE DUBLIN GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—As the outcome of a feeling on the part of a considerable number of gramophone enthusiasts in Dublin that the lack of any form of Gramophone Society in our city has been a long-standing reproach, a meeting was held on October 28th, with a view to the inauguration of such a society. The result was very encouraging, the room selected for the purpose being filled to overflowing, and the infant society has been set upon a sure foundation. It is a happy omen that Dr. Larchet, Professor of Music in the National University, has consented to be our President, and Mr. T. H. Weaving, organist of Christ Church Cathedral, Vice-President. Dr. Larchet, in an interesting address, emphasised the need for a society of this kind, and dwelt on the value of the gramophone as an educational force in relation both to individual taste and to the music of a nation. He pointed out that as the world-famous music of Germany had been developed from the home, so the enjoyment of the best music in recorded form in our homes in Dublin (the encouragement of which is one of the main objects of a Gramophone Society) may lead to great and far-reaching results. Rules drawn up on similar lines to those of existing societies were then submitted to the meeting and approved. The length of time occupied by formal business made it necessary to curtail considerably the programmes which had been arranged; but the five items provided by Mr. G. T. Z. Archer and the hon. secretary, Mr. N. C. Webb, gave some indication of the varied range of the gramophone as regards both types of music and quality of voices.

Mendelssohn's *Hebrides Overture* (Columbia) formed an impressive opening. The pre-eminent baritone Titta Ruffo exhibited his power in a record from Verdi's *Otello*, *Era la note* (H.M.V.). This song occurs at a most dramatic moment in the progress of the opera, and Mr. Archer helped us to appreciate it more fully by a brief indication of its setting. Mozart was represented by a number that must be reckoned among the most beautiful operatic duets in existence. *La ci darem* from *Don Giovanni*, in the singing of which Mabel Garrison and Reinhard Weimer leave nothing to be desired, as Mr. Webb's H.M.V. record made quite evident. The next item was *La Cathédrale Engloutie*, played by Cortot (H.M.V.). This, like most of Debussy's music, gains by repeated hearing, and one was inclined to suspect that those who had not heard the piece before failed to realise the strange depths of beauty which it suggests rather than discloses. If the introduction of such a record at an opening meeting was perhaps a little daring, at the same time it is well to remember that one valuable effect of a gramophone society should be to make us familiar with the works of the best composers of our own day; so we venture to hope that Debussy and the greater "moderns" will occupy a prominent place in the programme of our Society, side by side with the venerable masters of music. The concluding record was Massenet's *O Dolce Incanto* (H.M.V.), which is equally perfect in the singing by Smirnoff, the orchestral accompaniment, and the recording, and was enthusiastically received by the audience.—H. M. HARRISS, Hon. Recording Secretary.

THE BRADFORD AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—The annual general meeting of the above society was held in the Society Room at Church House on Wednesday, May 28th. The attendance was small and disappointing for a Society with so large a membership. The report and balance sheet were presented and showed the Society to be in a very sound position with an ever-growing roll of members and a substantial financial balance. The following were the officers elected for the season 1924-25: President, Mr. D. W. Stamford, M.P.; Vice-President, Mr. H. Watson; Honorary Secretary, Mr. M. Gladstone; Honorary Treasurer, Mr. A. Naylor; Press Secretary, Mr. A. Kenyon; Committee, Messrs. W. Balme, P. Clayton, E. Parnell, J. B. Hill, H. Mawson, and Miss M. Rhodes.

On Saturday, July 5th, about 25 members journeyed to Eldwick, to the residence of our esteemed member Mr. E. Parnell. This gathering was not a recognised Society meeting, but was brought about solely by the generosity of Mr. Parnell, who extended the

invitation to members of the Society. The time was taken up with discussions on a varied number of subjects, the chief of these being "Colour in Music." Another feature of the visit was the "Voltona-Recordia" sound-box which our host used on his machine. This box was a pronounced success with vocal records.

The July members' meeting was a competition night for the best record. Any type of needle-cut record was eligible, the successful entry being a Brunswick Clifophone disc, *Valse Caprice*, violin solo played by Bronislaw Hubermann, Mr. P. Clayton being the owner of this marvellous example of violin technique. The above meeting was the last, previous to the opening of the season 1924-25 in September.

The programme for the September members' meeting was taken up by the demonstration of records provided by various members. Mr. Balme's machine (Columbia old type Table Grand) was used. Discussion time was given over to the consideration of the future of the gramophone and wireless. Although it was admitted that wireless might have to be reckoned with, the general opinion was that the gramophone would hold its own and wireless would become a help by introducing good music to the notice of gramophone owners.

The first public night of the present season was given to the Society by Messrs. Joshua Marshall and Co., Ltd., on Wednesday, September 24th. A programme of H.M.V. records was given on the largest H.M.V. Cabinet Grand model, demonstrated by Mr. H. Rowntree. Societies who are fortunate enough to secure the services of such capable demonstrators as Mr. Rowntree should pat themselves on the back. A performance such as a Bradford open night, where an attendance of 500 is a usual occurrence, demands something out of the ordinary in the way of demonstrators. For the benefit of those record collectors who are ever on the look out for records of real merit the following items taken from the programme are worthy of attention.

1. *Quartet in D minor*, Flonzaley Quartet, H.M.V. D.B.251. A beautiful performance of chamber music and one to be recommended to those who have not yet explored this beautiful section of the world of music. 2. *Come per me sereno* (*La Sonnambula*), Galli-Curci, H.M.V. D.B.256. A solo remarkable for a beautiful trill handled with the consummate ease which we have come to expect from this wonderful artiste. 3. *The Flying Dutchman Overture*, Royal Albert Hall Orchestra, H.M.V. D.128. A good all-round orchestral record with excellent string tone, but, unfortunately, there are cuts. Amongst others should be noted a record of Ernest Hastings' *The Cautious Lover*. One must commend this artist for the clarity of his diction.

At the next public night Messrs. Alfred Moore will provide a selection of Columbia New Process records to be reproduced on the New Columbia Grafonola Model No. 27a room for everybody.—ALBERT KENYON, Press Secretary.

LIVERPOOL AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—Finding himself unable to carry out his original intention of demonstrating the new H.M.V. gramophone with pleated diaphragm, Mr. Newby, at the meeting held on October 1st, had perforce to be content with submitting a programme of records selected from his collection, and it is much to his credit that he succeeded admirably in mitigating any disappointment felt at the non-appearance of the new instrument. An interesting feature was the rendering of several Edison Re-creation discs on an ordinary type gramophone by means of the Jewel sound-box, these records giving quite pleasing and satisfying results. The record which perhaps elicited the most comment—and let it be said entirely favourable comment—was that of the duet (from *Ruddigore*) *There grew a little flower*, by Bertha Lewis and Darrell Fancourt, this being considered one of the best records of a Gilbert and Sullivan item yet published. The reason is not far to seek. Both the artists are imbued with the Savoy tradition and style, and the finish, charm, and effectiveness of their work is reflected in the recording of the duet. Only those whose training

and experience entitle them to be numbered amongst the elect should be entrusted with the recording of the Savoy operas; the work of others—be they never so good—lacks the impeccable finesse of your true Savoyard.

The programme arranged by Mr. H. Roberts for the evening of October 15th was perhaps chiefly notable for the reflections to which it gave rise. For instance, after hearing the exquisite delicacy revealed in the playing of the *E flat Nocturne* as recorded by Casals one could not but feel that the performer gave to the beautiful Chopin number, a rendering as pleasing and effective as could possibly be obtained from a performance of it in its original form, with the piano as the medium. In a recording of the graceful little song, *Visione Veneziana*, by Lelia Megane, one was impressed with the added charm lent by the subdued and intriguing accompaniment. The *Hymn to the Sun*, finely played by Isolde Menges, led one to question why this melody should, in popular esteem, take second place to that arrangement of the same composer's (Rimsky-Korsakov's), familiarly known as *Chanson Indoue*, which is surely less impressive and somewhat overdone. Why Bach should by some folks be considered abstruse and even dull "gives one furiously to think" when the fine rendering of one of the *Brandenburg Concertos*—that in G—by the Royal Albert Hall Orchestra is heard, for this item proved to be as clear-cut and tuneful as much of Mozart and more understandable than a great deal of Schumann or even of Beethoven, to say nothing of Brahms. It would appear that by a consensus of opinion Galli-Curci is hailed by gramophonists as the Queen of Song. Is it, then, a form of *lèse-majesté* to offer an opinion derogatory to the great one? That Galli-Curci is the possessor of great and rare natural gifts none will gainsay, and it is true that she displays considerable acquired ability and some intelligence in her singing. But to be perfectly frank she has obvious limitations. Her bravura work is unsurpassed—perhaps unequalled—but her enunciation, in passages where words as distinct from mere vocalized sounds are sung—is seldom wholly pleasing and is sometimes poor, her production being often spiritless and ineffectual and the quality of tone juvenile to a degree. Again, her irritating habit of prolonging a note inordinately, especially at the close of a song, cannot but make the judicious grieve and serves but to display a wonderful breath control at the expense of ruining the performance.—J. W. HARWOOD, Recording Secretary.

THE GLASGOW AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

The new session of the above Society was inaugurated on Monday, October 13th, in the Ca'doro Restaurant, Union Street, when the opening recital was given by Messrs. Ewing and McIntosh, Ltd. The programme provided was a finely balanced one, including a rare mixture of old and new recordings. Amongst the latter the following were outstanding and were acclaimed the pick of the bunch:—Overture, *Oliver Cromwell* (Gheel), Coldstream Guards; Overture, *Rosamunde* (Schubert), Wireless Orchestra; Male Voice Quartet, *On Wings of Song* (Mendelssohn), De Reske Singers; Piano solo, *Valse in C sharp minor* (Chopin), Wm. Murdoch; Violin duet, *Golden Sonata* (Purcell), Isolde Menges and Wm. Primrose. There was a large and appreciative audience, and the new session received a good send-off. We are all indebted to Messrs. Ewing and McIntosh, Ltd., for the excellent programme submitted.

On October 29th we had a return visit from Mr. H. L. Rink, of The Gramophone Coy., Ltd. Mr. Rink is a very big favourite with our members, and his visit was eagerly looked forward to. Mr. Rink has the happy knack of knowing how and when to tell an interesting story and carries about with him an excellent stock of "cuffies"; these he intersperses throughout the programme and thus keeps his audience in good humour. The programme provided was a highly interesting and varied one, the most outstanding being *The Liebeslied*, D.B.315, Kreisler; *Australian Bush Song*, C.1125, Dawson; these were accompanied on the pianoforte by Mr. Rink and proved very effective. Again we had Mendelssohn's *On Wings of Song*, this time as a violin solo, by Heifetz. The weirdly impressive *Death of Boris*, by Chaliapine, and a lovely quartet, *Un di, se ben rammentomi* (Verdi), rendered by Caruso, Galli-Curci, Perini, De Luca. Mr. Rink gave us a most interesting demonstration of synchronisation, using five gramophones. At the outset we had a 'cello solo, *Le Cygne*, by Cedric Sharp; while this was being played three separate gramophones were recording nightingales singing, and finally as the 'cello solo died away we had a rendering of *Down in the Forest* (Landon Ronald), finely rendered by John McCormack. This brought down the house and was voted one of the most successful and enjoyable gramophone performances yet heard. An interesting feature of the programme was a demonstration of the pleated diaphragm, several of the records being played

on the new instrument. Like the Editor, our members were not greatly impressed, but I hope we shall have another opportunity of hearing this instrument later.

We are indebted to Mr. Rink for a very enjoyable and instructive evening, and also to Messrs. Paterson, Sons and Co., for the trouble they put themselves to in providing five gramophones and a grand pianoforte for Mr. Rink's demonstration.—J. MACFARLANE, Hon. Secretary.

HULL GRAMOPHONIC CIRCLE.—

Programme by R. W. Slater, October 27th, 1924.

Victrola Records :—*Overture to Tannhäuser, Minuet* (Boccherini), *Danse des Mirlitons*, Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra; *Fourth Movement from Fifth Symphony* (Beethoven), La Scala Orchestra; *Vissi d'arte* (Tosca), *Voi lo sapete* (Cavalleria Rusticana), Jeritza; *Love's old sweet song, Silver threads among the gold*, Galli-Curci; *By the waters of Minnetonka, Deep river, Panis Angelicus* (Franck), *Altra notte* (Mefistofele), Alda; *Midnight Bells*, Kreisler; *Rock me to sleep*, Schumann-Heink; *Wanderers Nachtlied* (Rubenstein), Schumann and Farrar; *Vesti la giubba* (Pagliacci), Gigli; *Naads at the spring*, Samaroff; *Scherzo* (Mendelssohn), *Prelude* (Mendelssohn), *Prelude Pathétique* (Cherkassky), *Eccossaises* (Beethoven), Cherkassky (boy pianist, 11 years of age). *Musica Records* :—*Erl King* (Schubert), Schumann-Heink; *Vesper Hymn*, Hempel. *H.M.V. Records* :—*Harvest and My Treasure*, Kirkby Lunn; *Mad Scene* (Lucia di Lammermoor), Dal Monte.

CANTERBURY AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

At the meeting held at Messrs. Gaywood's rooms on Monday last a programme of records was given by Mr. Cozens. The machine was a Columbia Grafonola Table Grand, and a very varied and enjoyable selection was made up as follows:—Selection from *The Mikado* (Sullivan), National Military Band (Col.); *Wait* (d'Hardelot), Hubert Eisdell (Col.); *Sonata in D minor (Un poco presto)* (Brahms), Catterall and Murdoch (Col.); *Sonata in C major* (Beethoven), Mark Hambourg (H.M.V.); *Miserere (Il Trovatore)* (Verdi), Opera Company (Col.); *The Trumpet shall sound* (*The Messiah*) (Handel), Norman Allin (Col.); *Quartet in B flat (Allegro assai)* (Mozart), Lener Quartet (Col.); *Lilac Time* (Schubert), Herman Finch's Orchestra (Col.); *Violin Concerto, Op. 61 (Rondo)* (Beethoven), Isolde Menges (H.M.V.); *Softly awakes my heart (Samson and Delilah)* (Saint Saëns), Muriel Brunskill (Col.); *Andante Religioso, Squire* (Col.); *Comrades in Arms* (Adam), Century Quartet (Col.); *Gavotte* (Bach), Marie Hall (H.M.V.); *Concerto No. 5, Part 8* (Beethoven), Fred Lamond (Col.); *Lo! here the gentle lark* (Bishop), Galli-Curci (H.M.V.); *Merrie England* (Selection) (German), Columbia Light Opera (Col.); *The people that walk in darkness (The Messiah)* (Handel), Norman Allin (Col.); *Quartet in F (Adagio)* (Beethoven), Lener Quartet (Col.); Military Marches of the Household Regiment, and chorus, *God bless the Prince of Wales*; Band of the Coldstream Guards and Male Chorus (H.M.V.). During the meeting one of the new H.M.V. machines was demonstrated, and great interest was shown by the members, the good and bad points of the instrument being enthusiastically discussed.—S. F. WAKE, Hon. Secretary.

GRIMSBY AND CLEETHORPES GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—

A meeting was held in the Coffee Hall, the headquarters of the Society, on Friday evening, November 14th. Messrs. Gough and Davy had sent a new H.M.V. Pedestal Model with pleated diaphragm. This was the first occasion that the members had of hearing this instrument. A varied selection of records was demonstrated, and in comparing the results with the old model, opinions were equally divided with the exception that on instrumental and orchestral items the new model was better than anything previously heard, although the vocal items might have been a little clearer.

On Wednesday evening, November 5th, the Society held their first of a series of concerts for the purpose of advertising the Society's work. Mr. Moses Baritz, who is a well-known musical lecturer, connected with the gramophone and wireless world, gave a lecture entitled "A night with Gilbert and Sullivan." A large number of members and friends attended and Councillor Bindell the President, acted as chairman. The lecturer, who had a very fine style, held the audience's attention for two hours, and everyone was sorry when he had finished. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to him and also to Messrs. Houlder Brothers for the loan of records and the Grafonola model. It is hoped that gramophone enthusiasts will rally round and become members, so that the Society can enlarge its scope in this direction of big concerts.—S. CROFT, Hon. Secretary.

SHEFFIELD GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—At the meeting held at headquarters on October 21st, the programme was in the capable hands of Mr. E. R. Scott, one of the stalwarts of the Society, and having regard to his extensive library of records, we were assured of a good evening's entertainment. The items were well chosen, and included the following:—*Ave Maria*, Melba; *Death of Otello*, Mullings; *Humoreske*, Kreisler; *La Bohème* (*Leoncavallo*), Caruso; also orchestral pieces, amongst which was the *Midsummer Night's Dream Overture*, by the Queen's Hall Light Orchestra; it would surely be difficult to find more beautiful music than this work of Mendelssohn. A hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Scott was duly proposed and carried unanimously, and the usual competition was proceeded with. The winner was Mr. J. H. T. Holmes (now Vice-President), his record being *Minuet in G* (Burmeister).

November 4th was a "special occasion" in that we were privileged to hear Mr. M. Baritz, of Manchester. He is truly an encyclopaedia in matters musical, and it is scarcely necessary to say that everyone present enjoyed his lecture-recital entitled "A Night with British Composers," demonstrated with records that he brought specially for the purpose. He plied us with interesting and useful information for close upon two and a half hours, and his efforts were highly appreciated. As Mr. Baritz remarked, British musical genius compares favourably with that of any other country, and certainly so far as modern composers are concerned we are the foremost. His programme was well balanced and embraced excerpts from the works of Purcell, Stanford, Sullivan, Holst, Wallace, Grainger, Litolf, etc., etc., the vocal items including old favourites such as *Annie Laurie*, *In happy moments day by day*, *Danny boy*, etc. In conclusion, it may be said that Mr. Baritz has a wonderful grasp of his subject, and he imparted to us a fund of information that was most enlightening and educative. The vote of thanks proposed and seconded by Messrs. Holmes and Thompson respectively was carried enthusiastically.—THOS. H. BROOKS, Hon. Press Secretary.

THE NORTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE AND PHONOGRAPH SOCIETY.—A large audience assembled on the occasion of our November meeting, at which Mr. Norman F. Hillyer (Hon. President), occupied the chair, introducing our popular Hon. Financial Secretary and Chairman, Mr. L. Ivory, whose annual demonstration of H.M.V. classical celebrity records has come to be regarded as one of the outstanding events of the season. The maintenance of a high standard of achievement in any given field of endeavour involves the individual in an apparently impossible task, namely, that in order to maintain himself he must outdo himself. Always a critical audience, the members of the North London Society were aroused to evident enthusiasm by the programme provided by Mr. Ivory, which is here set forth:—

Ruslan u Ludmila (*Overture*) (Glinka), Symphony Orchestra; *Prize Song* (*The Mastersingers*) (Wagner), Joseph Hislop; *Tutte le feste al tempio* (*Rigoletto*) (Verdi), Galli-Curci; *Rhapsodie Hongroise*, No. 12, Part 2 (Liszt), Arthur de Greef; *Il est venu ce jour de lutte* (Diaz), Dinh Gilly; *Raymonda* (*Grand Adagio*, Op. 57) (Glazounov), Heifetz; *Angels ever bright and fair* (Handel), Alma Gluck; *Oh mia Gilda! fanciulla a me rispondi!* (Verdi), Battistini and Moscicca; *L'Echo* (Echert), Tetrazzini; *Se oppressi ognor da ria sentenza* (Halevy), Pinza; *Caprice Basque* (Sarasate), Mischa Elman; *La Capinera* (Benedict), Galli-Curci; *A te, o cara* (*Puritani*) (Bellini), Michele Fleta; *Symphony No. 5 in E minor (Finale)* (Tchaikovsky), Symphony Orchestra (three records); *Rosamunde* (*Overture*) (Schubert), Wireless Orchestra; *Son vergin vezzosa investa di sposa* (Bellini), Galli-Curci; *Dalle Stanze, ove Lucia* (*Lucia*) (Donizetti), Pinza; *Danza espanola*, Op. 21, No. 1 (Sarasate), Heifetz; *Tombe degl'avi miei* (*Lucia*) (Donizetti), Joseph Hislop; *One sweetly solemn thought* (Ambrose), Schumann-Heinke; *O casto fior* (*Ra di Lahore*) (Massenet), Battistini; *Divinites du Styx* (*Alceste*), (Gluck), Jeritza; *Hungarian Rhapsody No. 10* (Liszt), Paderevski; *Madamina* (*Don Giovanni*), Parts 1 and 2 (Mozart), Chaliapine; *Spargi d'amaio pianto* (*Lucia*) (Donizetti), Galli-Curci; *Pif, paf, Pouf* (*Les Huguenots*) (Meyerbeer), Journet; *Introduction et Tarantelle*, Op. 43 (Sarasate), Heifetz; *Hosanna* (Granier), Caruso; *Sevillana* (*Don Cesar de Bazan*) (Massenet), Galli-Curci; *Invitation to the waltz* (Weber), Cortot.

In the above we have a programme which, as Mr. Hillyer pointed out, has never been realised in the actual assembly at one time and in one place, before any audience, of the artistes mentioned. Even money could not do what the gramophone has done in this instance, much less "wireless." All this, by the way, without any prejudice against wireless, seeing that many of the keenest gramophone enthusiasts are also keen on wireless, but merely to

accentuate the fact that both of the above methods of sound reproduction have their separate scope and particular function. Mr. Ivory used his own H.M.V. instrument, which has so often been appreciated at our gatherings, and although his favourite form of interpretation is through the medium of fibre needles, as a concession to the requirements of a hall as large as the above,¹ the majority of the records were played with the Columbia Ideal needles. In a few cases where Mr. Ivory reverted to fibres the results were quite good, although perhaps because the records were of a robust character. Some well-known faces in the gramophone world were present, of whom Mr. Herbert (Hon. Chairman, South London Society) and Mr. Mills (Hon. Secretary, South London Society) were noticed. Mr. Hillyer proposed the vote of thanks, which was unanimously carried and suitably responded to by Mr. Ivory.—WILLIAM J. ROBINS, Hon. Recording Secretary.

THE SOUTH LONDON GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—The series of concerts devoted to the works of one composer, recently inaugurated, was carried a step further on October 18th, when a highly interesting double programme was presented divided between Haydn and Schubert. We have so far had Bach, Beethoven, Mozart, and now the two masters mentioned above, as our musical "hosts," and, while it is as yet hardly possible to get together a representative programme in which either Brahms or Schumann figure, it shows what progress has been made along the path of enlightenment, and before long, no doubt, some of the above will be out of date, and it will have become a matter of course to be able to arrange a cut and dried concert in which all the greatest musical minds will occupy a worthy place. It is somewhat difficult to approach Haydn except through the medium of his chamber music, as there is no adequate record of any of his symphonies, and for vocal examples we are fain to go to the *Creation*, and even here the recorded examples are somewhat meagre. For example, the English catalogues are only able to give us a snippet of the "Surprise" Symphony. Although, for the concert in question, we were able to have his *Symphony in G major*, the so-called "Military" Symphony, on Victor records. His chamber music has ever vied with that of Mozart in popular approval, and there are several notable examples available, of which we heard that in E flat, Op. 64, No. 6, by the English String Quartette; the *Andante* from the *Emperor*, Op. 76, No. 3, by the London String Quartette (issued during the war and long since withdrawn); the *Andante Cantabile* from Op. 64, No. 5, by the Flonzaley Quartette, and the *Finale* from that in D, Op. 76, No. 5, by the Lener Quartette. The backwardness of choral recording is no doubt responsible for the lack of any such examples from the *Creation*, and we had, therefore, to content ourselves with three of the airs: *Roaming in foaming billows*, *With verdure clad*, and *In native worth*, by Robert Radford, Florence Austral, and Tudor Davies respectively. The former is bad Radford, but as the solitary example at present available, it must stand for the present. When we come to Schubert, it is gratifying to find that there is a steadily increasing list of his compositions, and, although his songs are taking a long while to filter through, some excellent examples exist of his marvellous genius in this direction. As interpreters we are indebted for the bulk to Frieda Hempel and Elena Gerhardt, and from these hands we had *Wohin?*, *Der Erlkönig*, and *Der Musensohn*, while the solitary effort so far in the Brunswick catalogue by Maria Ivogün, *The Post and Hark! hark!* the lark, came as a surprise to a good many. The better-known *Ave Maria* and *Serenade* were given respectively by Julia Culp and John McCormack, and it seems a pity that the Schubert numbers by the former in the Victor catalogue are not made available over here, as she possesses an ideal voice. Instrumentally there is not a great deal: the *Overture* and *Ballet Music* from *Rosamunde*, the *Unfinished Symphony*, and *Marche Militaire* seem all that is available orchestrally, and the *Ballet Music* is not yet adequately done. The record in this instance was a *Musica*, by the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, and the present writer has asked for it from one company with little or no encouragement. It seems an item that at present is ousted by duplicate recordings, or else by a fetish. Incidentally, the latest record of the *Overture* from *Rosamunde*, by the Wireless Orchestra, leaves out a big chunk, and shows another instance of the operation of fetish, where a work that really requires three sides must only have two (the Germans seem to do this quite often, so why shouldn't we?)

In conclusion, the last two movements of the *Trio in B flat*, Op. 99, were played through the medium of Albert Sammons, Lionel Tertis, and Mrs. Hobday; this is one of the best things the Aeolian Company ever issued.—S. F. D. HOWARTH, Reporting Secretary.

[Programme omitted for lack of space.—ED.]

THE SOUTH-EAST LONDON RECORDED MUSIC SOCIETY.

—Since our last report we have had two meetings, the first (on October 27th) being devoted to two matters of outstanding interest—viz., a demonstration of the H.M.V. issue of *Madame Butterfly*, just previously issued and a demonstration of the H.M.V. new gramophone with the pleated diaphragm. Our President took charge of the opera, which, unfortunately, we could not have completed in view of the time to be devoted to the new gramophone, but during the time at our disposal, we skimmed over the outstanding points, all of which will be familiar to everyone with the least knowledge of opera—surely unless one knows “Butterfly” one's operatic education is only in embryo. The general opinion was that the issue is good, although the demonstrator was somewhat of the opinion that it lacked “flow.” It was somewhat after nine o'clock before our very great friend Mr. Yeomans turned up to take charge of the “pleats.” He immediately got to work, and as usual, kept us interested and amused. It is not within our province to express any opinion on the new machine, and no doubt everyone at all interested will form or will have formed his own opinion. Let us just say that a full house was extremely interested, and everyone felt very grateful to Mr. Yeomans for coming such a long way on a horrible night to give us this demonstration—the first Society in the country to have such a demonstration. The Society is also indebted to Messrs. Robert Morley and Co., of 108, High Street, Lewisham, for so kindly lending the gramophone and saving Mr. Yeomans and ourselves a great deal of work that might have otherwise been necessary.

The November meeting was devoted to yet another opera, but so different from *Butterfly*. *Hugh the Drover* (Vaughn Williams) was the attraction, this being under the direction of Mr. E. C. Coxall. Frankly, the writer feels that the utmost value was not got out of it by the members in the single hearing which they had. Their appreciation of the work would have been greatly increased had they been able to hear each record or at least portions of it two or three times. However, what happened will no doubt have given them appetite to get to know more of a work which rings thoroughly British. The work is not recorded complete, there are considerable cuts, but the cream of the music is there. A noteworthy feature was the singing of Mary Lewis in the part of Mary, and of Tudor Davies as Hugh. During the interval members had the opportunity of hearing some excellent Parlophone records, for which we were indebted to the Parlophone Co., and after that a member, Mr. Matthews, gave a short programme of “ballads.” The writer had to leave before this part and so must regrettably omit reference to the efforts put forward by Mr. Matthews.

Our prospectus and syllabus for 1925 is now ready and application for same should be made to the Secretary, 128, Erlanger Road, New Cross, S.E. Next meeting, “Christmas Music,” December 8th.—ERNEST BAKER.

MANCHESTER GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.—At the November meeting of the Manchester Gramophone Society Mr. C. J. Brennand scored a distinct success with an exceedingly fine lecture recital on Classical and Operatic Music. The comprehensive programme was packed with good things, prominence being given to musical numbers by Wagner, Verdi, Strauss, and Gounod. In endeavouring to cover so wide a field, Mr. Brennand essayed a task which was at once difficult and complex, but he demonstrated such a thorough musical knowledge of his records (which in themselves were so attractive from the strictly musical point of view) that his success was never in doubt for a moment. In choosing his vocal records Mr. Brennand has obviously attached greater importance to purity of tone and cultured vocal style rather than clarity of diction, a point which was most noticeable in a rendering of *Return Victorious* from Verdi's *Aida*, by Florence Austral, where, according to Mr. Brennand's piquant observation, the only intelligible words were “What wild words do I utter”!!! This humorous paradox strongly emphasises the pressing need for improvement in the many hundreds of records which, according to the makers, are “sung in English”! Not one of the demonstrator's records was without interest, but they were in most cases chiefly admired because of their tonal and artistic beauty. Reproduced with a fibre needle, an Elman record of Drdla's *Souvenir* sounded most pleasing. Haydn's *Quartet in D major*, by the Lener String Quartet, and Bruch's *Kol Nidrei* are two very fine records, and both items were much favoured by our members. The latter item is a Parlophone record. Martinelli's voice came out extremely well in a rendering of *O muto asil* from *William Tell*, while on the other hand Caruso sounded very amusing, though rather ludicrous in the American popular song, *Over there*. This latter record will probably appeal to extremists in curiosity collecting!!

A notable item on the programme was Strauss's *Dance of the Seven Veils* from the opera *Salome*. Considering the complicated texture of the music and the unusual instrumentation, this record may be considered a high achievement in the art of recording. The Straussian atmosphere about the record is quite realistic and thrilling, which should appeal to those who can appreciate the genius of the composer. Two items from Wagner's *Valkyrie* on H.M.V. records deserved a greater measure of appreciation than they received. In a way it was a pity they were reproduced with a fibre needle because the use of the fibre stylus is apt to create an undue sense of the miniature in music which we are accustomed to associate with majestic bigness. While to the ordinary hearer the subdued nature of the vocal parts will detract from the value of these records, the true Wagnerite, knowing the psychology of Wagner's wonderful music, will find in them a constant source of delight even if only for the beautiful emotional colour and graphic expression of the orchestra. A record by Journet of *Son lo spirito che nega* from Boito's *Mephistophele* revealed a fine sonorous bass voice, but in the way of interpretation it can hardly be considered so good as a similar rendering by Mardonnes. Journet's interpretation seems to lack the biting Satanic contempt and impudent cynicism of Mardonnes. Parenthetically it should be noted that the whistling effect is rather too obviously done by one of the orchestral instruments, and the tempo is hardly quick enough. *Der vogel im Walde*, by Selma Kurz, was probably the best vocal item on the programme. This singer has a most beautiful voice, and though she does not exhibit the wonderful ease and dexterity of Galli-Curci in cadenza work, she is essentially an artiste of refinement. Her limpid, mellifluous tones and cultured vocalisation are probably heard to better advantage in Goldmark's *Lockruf* and Verdi's *Ballo in Maschera*, two solos which bear striking testimony to her supreme art. Altogether Mr. Brennand's entertainment was a very fine achievement, and upon the completion of his programme he was the recipient of a deservedly popular and very hearty vote of thanks.

The next meeting will be held in the Onward Buildings, on December 8th, at 7.15 p.m. Subject:—Demonstration and comparison of H.M.V. records and instruments, including the new model with pleated diaphragm. Ladies and gentlemen interested in gramophone matters are cordially invited to attend.—G. GRAHAM.

RICHMOND AND DISTRICT GRAMOPHONE SOCIETY.

A record competition provided an interesting addition to the activities of the Society at a well-attended meeting held on Monday, 17th inst. Voting papers were distributed to each member of the audience and the competition on this occasion was for the best bass or baritone record. Ten members competed, and the records were duly demonstrated. The result of the ballot showed a large majority in favour of the *Toreador Song* from *Carmen*, sung by Riccardo Stracciari, the celebrated Italian operatic baritone, which undoubtedly was a splendid performance. The second place was tied for with Zanelli's rendering of *Pauvre martyr obscur* and a captivating little ballad, *Can't remember*, sung by Harold Williams. The winner, Mr. G. W. Grant, was heartily congratulated upon his success, and as a result his record collection will be further enhanced. The competition was organised by Mr. T. Sydney Allen, in conjunction with Mr. Randall Phillips. The second part of the programme was contributed by Mr. Grant with further records from his library, which included *Concerto for two violins*: (a) *Vivace*, (b) *Largo* (Bach), Kreisler and Zimbalist. Gluck's *J'ai perdu mon Eurydice*, Ansseau. *Perpetuum Mobile* (Weber), a brilliant recording by Benno Moisewitch. *Du meine Seele* (Schumann), Frieda Hempel. *March Miniature* (Tchaikovsky), Boston Symphony Orchestra. *Grand March* (*Tannhäuser*) (Wagner), New Queen's Hall Orchestra.

The next meeting takes place on December 1st, when a selection of records compiled from current lists issued by the principal gramophone companies will be heard.—T. SYDNEY ALLEN, Hon. Press Secretary.

Space forbids the full report of the Brixton Gramophone Society meeting of Nov. 4th, when Mr. H. Virtz gave a programme on his “Senior Monarch,” and used no less than three of his highly specialised home-made sound-boxes. Mr. J. W. Borders followed with the third act of *Aida* on eight H.M.V. discs. Mr. Geo. W. Webb reports that the meeting was a great success; that meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month at the New Morris Hall; and that Mr. J. T. Fisher, 28, Fieldhouse Road, Balham, S.W. 12, is the Hon. Secretary.

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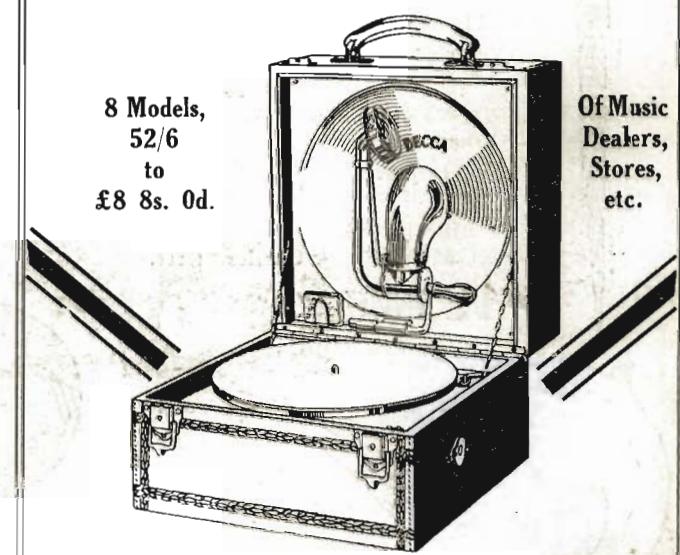
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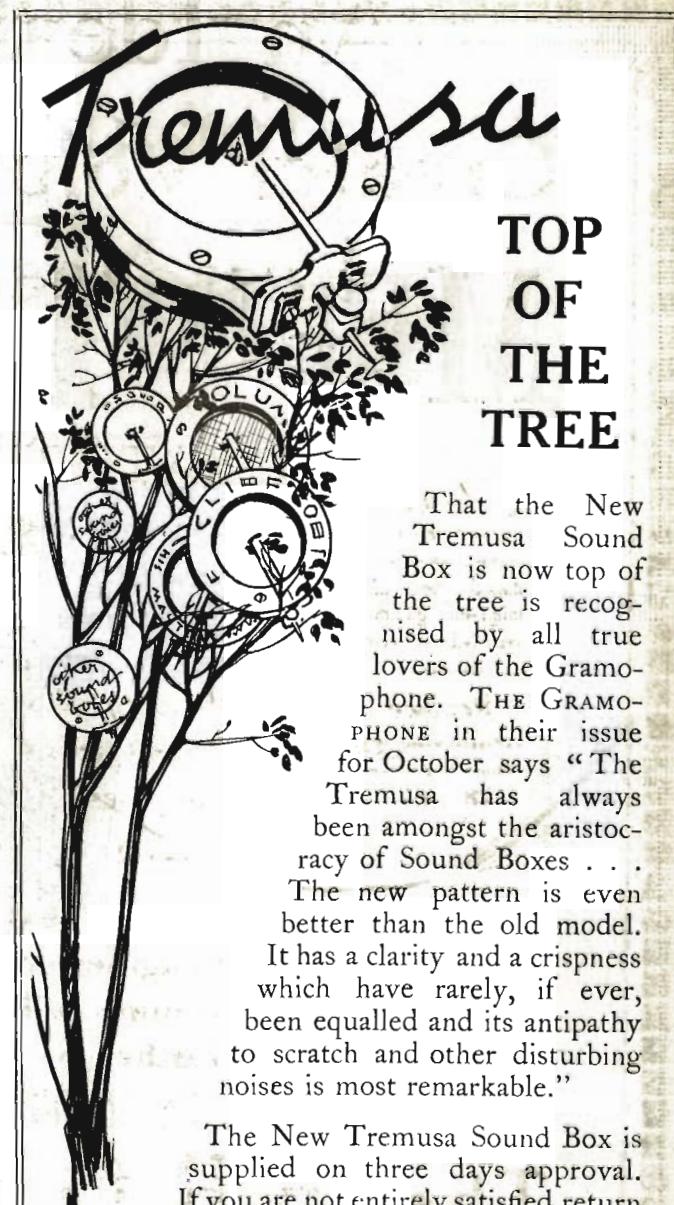
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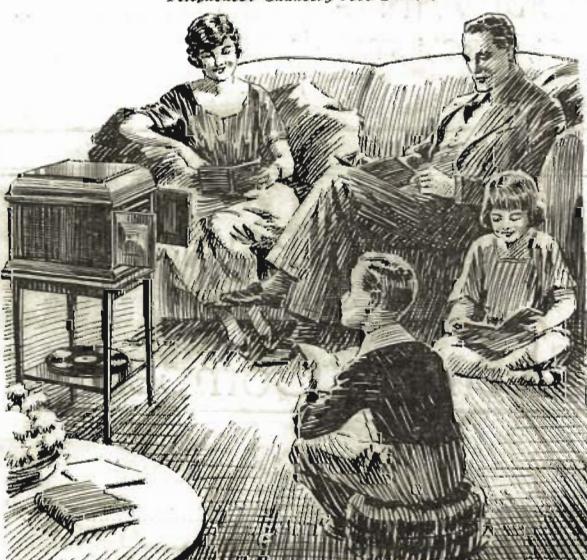
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